

14th December 2017

By email

From:
Clerk to Glapthorn Parish Council
30 Lytham Park
Oundle
PE8 4FB

Reference: 17/02358/OUT

To:
Jennifer Wallis - Planning Services
East Northamptonshire Council
Cedar Drive
Thrapston
NN14 4LZ

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

I acknowledge receipt of a copy of the application, in respect of:

Planning Applications 17/02358/OUT – Outline: Erection of new four bedroom dwelling, works to include demolition of existing garage and erection of replacement garage for existing dwelling: some matters reserved (except access, scale and layout) at The White Cottage, Main Street, Glapthorn PE8 5BE.

The planning application as detailed above has been considered at a public meeting of the Glapthorn Parish Council and I am authorised to make the following response:

The application is **not supported** therefore the Parish Council **objects** to the proposal. In considering the application the Council were mindful of current Local Plans, the National Planning Policy Framework and also the emerging Glapthorn Neighbourhood Plan which has been submitted to ENC for 'Regulation 16 Consultations' and independent examination on 13th December 2017.

The application for development extends beyond the settlement boundary as set out in the RNOTP and the Glapthorn Neighbourhood Plan (as submitted to ENC in December 2017 for Regulation 16 purposes) and directly contravenes various policies in the Neighbourhood Plan as set out below.

1. The Application does NOT accord with Neighbourhood Plan Policies

The applicant wrongly states that

"Albeit that the Neighbourhood Plan can only be given limited weight at this stage the proposal is considered to be largely in accordance with draft policies which are emerging as part of the NP making exercise. The policies accept the need for new housing sites and favours smaller houses on smaller infill sites. The site lies beyond the draft village boundary but the applicant is likely to continue to oppose this and accordingly little weight can be ascribed to the draft NP at this stage."

This is a misleading set of statements and erroneous in a number of respects.

1.1 It should be noted that the proposed development extends beyond not only the proposed village settlement boundary but also the current RNOTP settlement boundary. The

Glaphorn Neighbourhood Plan proposes no change to the settlement boundary in this location.

1.2 It is suggested that the applicant will “continue to oppose this (village boundary) and accordingly little weight can be ascribed to the NP at this stage”. The applicant has in fact chosen not to submit an objection to the NP settlement boundary in the Regulation 14 Consultations. The applicant was provided with the Draft Plan including the Policies Map in August 2017 at the commencement of the Regulation 14 consultation but has made no submission nor made any contact with the NP Steering Group or Parish Council. If the applicant had any concerns about the settlement boundary (or the various supporting policies) then the opportunity should have been taken at Reg 14 stage.

1.3 It is suggested by the applicant that the application is largely in accordance with draft NP Policies. This is not correct as the application directly contravenes the following:

- this site was considered for allocation for new housing but was resoundingly rejected by the community during the community consultations (see below)
- Policy 2 of the NP states that “housing development in Glaphorn Parish shall be contained within the settlement boundary for Glaphorn Village” (as defined on the Policies Map)
- Policy 3.3 “Proposals for new housing development within the settlement boundary will be supported provided that ... it is well related to the existing built form of the village thus adhering to the existing building lines, avoiding back-fill in garden spaces and not encroaching beyond the village settlement boundary”. This proposal does not conform to existing building lines, it is garden back-fill and encroaches outside the defined village settlement boundary.
- Policy 3 also requires that “all proposals for new housing development will have to demonstrate how they help to maintain a mix of tenure, type and size of dwelling in the Parish. Proposals must demonstrate how they respond to the particular need for smaller properties ...” In comparison with housing need identified in the NNJCS and the East Northamptonshire Housing Needs Assessment, Glaphorn is significantly over provided with 4 bedroom detached properties and severely deficient in smaller houses of mixed tenure.
- Policy 7 (Built Environment) requires that “the linear layout of the existing village shall be retained”. This requirement is designed to avoid any rear garden back-fill, and is specified in accordance with NNJCS Policy 11.2.b which states that “Neighbourhood Plans may identify sites within or adjoining villages to help meet locally identified needs or may designate sensitive areas where infill development will be resisted or subject to special control.” Rear garden back-fill, as in this application, is such a designated sensitive area chosen by the community as a location to be avoided.
- Policy 10 also states quite explicitly “Development proposals which do not respect the linearity character of the village, such as use of rear gardens for placement of dwellings, will not be supported”. This is a very clear and unambiguous statement and clearly precludes acceptance of this planning application.

2. The Neighbourhood Plan Must be Given Due Weight

2.1 NPPF (Annex 1 para 216) makes it quite clear that “from the date of publication, decision-takers may also give weight* to relevant policies in emerging plans according to

- the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced the preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);

- the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies; and
- the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in this Framework.

*unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

2.2 NPPG says “Decision takers should respect evidence of local support prior to referendum”.

2.3 In respect of the above criteria the Glapthorn Plan is well advanced and must be given significant weight by the decision-takers when considering this application, because

2.3.1 The Plan is well advanced and has passed through Regulation 14 Consultations and has been submitted to ENC for Regulation 16 purposes in December 2017.

2.3.2 There were no objections, or indeed comments about the principle of the Settlement Boundary and no objections or comments concerning the boundary drawn on the Policies Map in the vicinity of the White Cottage or indeed anywhere in “lower Glapthorn”. The applicant made no representations.

2.3.3 The relevant policies, indeed all NP policies, are consistent with the NPPF and the NNJCS as demonstrated in the Basic Conditions Assessment. Furthermore, no comments were raised by ENC at Regulation 14 stage suggesting any inconsistency with NNJCS or NPPF; indeed a covering comment from ENC said “it is considered to represent positive planning for the village to 2031”.

2.3.4 As the submitted Consultation Statement evidences, the NP has received high levels of community participation and high levels of community endorsement at the informal consultation stages as well as at Reg 14 – thus meeting the NPPG criterion. Full reports on informal and formal consultations are available on the Parish Council web site.

Thus in accordance with NPPG and the Ministerial Statement of 10th July 2014, the Plan and its policies represent a material consideration.

3. Housing Need and Supply in Glapthorn

3.1 As the submitted NP shows, sites in locations – which are acceptable, are deliverable and have community support – could provide 38 additional dwellings in the period 2016 to 2031. This represents an increase of one-third in the housing stock of the Parish thus making a very significant contribution to the rural housing needs identified in the NNJCS. This proposal cannot be justified by NNJCS Policies 11, 13 or 29 as the housing needs are met by the specific site allocations and policies in the NP.

3.2 The Neighbourhood Plan provision for a total of 38 new dwellings represents a substantial challenge for a rural parish and small village with minimal facilities; there is no shop, health facilities, public house or scheduled public transport. Glapthorn fails to meet generally accepted criteria for being a sustainable location for new housing being heavily reliant upon cars for transport requirements; but Glapthorn considers it is able to welcome and absorb new dwellings and families and can benefit from some modest growth provided it is contained within the housing numbers in the Plan and in the specified locations which have been chosen to retain the character of Glapthorn.

3.3 However concerns remain in the community about the scale of development included in the Plan. Thus implementation of the Plan by way of development control decisions, as and

when planning applications are forthcoming, does need to be done in a phased manner which reflects the ability of the Village to absorb new housing on only a gradual basis.

3.4 Thus the NP already makes suitable provision for a sustainable level, and locations, for new housing and therefore additional approvals could only be justified by material considerations which have not been presented in this case.

4. Community Views

4.1 Housing needs and the contribution which Glapthorn can make to meeting those needs has been at the forefront in the compilation of the NP. Irrespective of the weight given to the NP, considerable weight should in any case be given to the clearly expressed views of the community over the last 12 months when participation levels have been in the region of 70% of all adults in the Parish. During those consultations

- 78% of consultees rejected the concept of back-fill
- support for sites INCLUDED in the Plan (i.e. not including this site) ranged from 59% to 90% demonstrating the community's willingness to embrace new housing in appropriate locations.
- 74% of consultees, after careful consideration, rejected this particular location for new housing.

4.2 There are many large back gardens in Glapthorn. The recent consultation exercises in preparation for the Neighbourhood Plan have tested and rejected these as suitable sites for development. The acceptance of this application would create a most unfortunate precedent and thus alter the whole basis for the community's development aspirations. Acceptance would also severely damage the community's confidence in a plan-led system.

5. National Planning Policy Framework

5.1 The following are especially pertinent when considering any application at the time a NP is "made" or, as the case with Glapthorn NP, significantly advanced in its preparation

- NPPF para 183 "Neighbourhood Planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need."
- NPPF para 184 "Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure they get the right type of development for their community"
- NPPF para 185 "Outside strategic elements, NPs will be able to shape and direct sustainable development in their area. Local planning authorities should avoid duplicating planning processes for non-strategic policies where a neighbourhood plan is in preparation"

6. Housing White Paper December 2016

6.1 Attention is drawn to paragraph 1.31

"We will ensure councils can continue to protect valued areas of open space and the character of residential neighbourhoods, and stop unwanted garden grabbing."

7. Conclusion

Hence in summary, the proposed development

7.1 Is not necessary to meet Glapthorn's or other local housing need

- 7.2. Is not in-fill development but back-fill use of a rear garden
- 7.3. Is counter to the community's wish to maintain the linear character of Glapthorn
- 7.4. Creates an unacceptable precedent for use of rear gardens
- 7.5. Would redefine the village settlement boundary in a manner which is counter to the expressed view of the community.
- 7.6. The Glapthorn NP should be given significant weight as a material consideration.

Please note a copy of the Glapthorn Draft Neighbourhood Plan, along with associated documents, as submitted to ENC may be found on the Glapthorn Parish website by using the following link:

<http://glapthorn.org.uk/index.php/consultation-under-regulation-16/>

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Copy to:
Chairman Glapthorn Parish Council
Clerk to Glapthorn Neighbourhood Planning Group
District Ward Councillor