

Department of the Environment and  
Department of Transport

Common Services

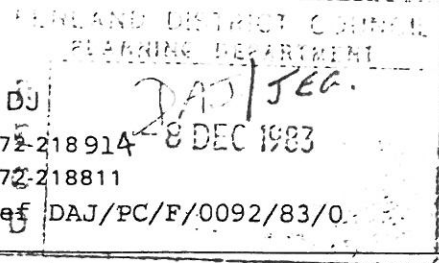
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Council's Ref DAJ/PC/F/0092/83/0



R D Wormald Esq RIBA ARICS MRTPI  
5 Fen Close  
WISBECH  
Cambridgeshire

Your reference

Form TCP 201 dated 26 August 1983

Our reference

T/APP/DO515/A/83/5523/ PE 2

Date

28 DEC 1983

Sir

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1971 SECTION 36 AND SCHEDULE 9  
APPEAL BY MR D AND MRS S CLARK  
LAND AT EBENEZER, THE COTTONS, OUTWELL, CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
APPLICATION NO:- F/0092/83/0

1. I have been appointed by the Secretary of State for the Environment to determine your clients' appeal against the decision of the Fenlands District Council to refuse to grant planning permission for the erection of a dwellinghouse on the above-mentioned land. I have considered the written representations made by your clients and by the council and I visited the site and its surroundings on 29 November 1983.
2. Outwell, together with the adjoining village of Upwell, lies approximately 5 miles to the south-east of Wisbech in a flat, open fenland landscape. The settlements are formed principally by ribbon and spaced development on either side of a network of roads and byways in the area and the surrounding countryside supports mainly smallholdings and market gardens with larger farms occupying the more distant land and a good deal of widely scattered and sporadic residential development throughout. The Cottons is a collection of small houses and bungalows which lies about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile to the west of Outwell and the site is a plot of open land in the south-westerly corner of a smallholding, comprising a modern bungalow with outbuildings and attached pasture, which extends to the north of the group of dwellings.
3. The site has a history of refused planning applications for residential development which goes back to 1974, including an unsuccessful appeal in 1981, and as there is nothing in the representations before me to show that the environmental considerations have changed since the last application or that the current proposal is different in principle and substance to the earlier plans to develop the land I am unable to find any good and sound reasons for dissenting from the previous decisions. The site is not of a size nor in a setting which would permit its categorisation as a narrow gap in an otherwise built-up frontage and, therefore, I am of the opinion that its development cannot be justified on the grounds that such would be infilling. On the contrary, I consider that the site cannot be described other than as the corner of an open field forming part of an agricultural unit and the fact that there are buildings nearby does not, in my opinion, exempt it from the policy restrictions on development in the countryside for all but agricultural purposes and certain defined rural interests. Furthermore, there is virtually nothing to distinguish the plot from countless others in the area where there is space between scattered housing and I consider that planning permission in this case would open the door to a proliferation of similar proposals which would be difficult to resist.
4. This could result in great harm being done to the special character of the fenland landscape, already threatened, in my opinion, by the seemingly haphazard

and uncoordinated development which exists in the open countryside and I consider it would be entirely wrong to continue this damaging encroachment by permitting a further extension of an isolated group of dwellings which stands outside a village settlement and which is generally unrelated to its rural surroundings or interests. The site is an integral part of an agricultural holding and no reasons of any consequence have been advanced for detaching the land from it and I am unable to foresee any circumstances in which the plot might acquire development potential or justify a departure from the established planning policies and practices which have led to the past and current refusals of permission.

5. I have had regard for all the other matters raised in the written representations which have been made and have come to the conclusion that none is of greater weight than those factors which have led me to my decision. For these reasons and in exercise of the powers transferred to me I hereby dismiss your clients' appeal and refuse to grant planning permission.

I am Sir  
Your obedient Servant

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'N Barclay', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is written in dark ink and is somewhat stylized.

N BARCLAY FCI Arb FBIM FASMC  
Inspector