

THE KING'S LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK LOCAL PLAN: SITE ALLOCATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES

Issue 21: Great Bircham and Bircham Tofts (G.43)

Great Bircham

Proposed allocation of site G42.1

I refer to the soundness criteria set out in paragraph 182 of the National Planning Policy statement and contend that the selection of G42.1 is not JUSTIFIED.

The selection process for the preferred site in Great Bircham is flawed because planning criteria have not been applied equally to all the sites considered in the village.

1. The site is outside the envelope of the village and will be a form of ribbon development along the road partially filling a gap between existing houses. This infilling is used as an exclusion for not proposing other sites near Bircham Tofts. Sites 902 and 903 are rejected because they are separate from the main built up area. G42.1 whilst not totally separate is, however, on the edge of the village and would link it to separate rural properties.
2. This road is also a major entrance to our village and to develop along the frontage will be just another step to suburbanisation and spoil what is currently the best approach into the village. Development of other selected sites in the village would improve the street-scene whereas development of the G42.1 site will only depreciate the environment.
3. There are no footpaths to the south of the King's Head, a requirement of the Highways Authority for new developments (para 7.41.9). If, as proposed, a pavement is constructed, this would detract from the visual amenity of the very attractive grass verges to the spinney, the picturesque village sign and the King's Head. The pavement would be totally out of character to this attractive part of the village.
4. Development of the site would require the removal of mature hedging, another item quoted in defence of some of the other Bircham sites which has been ignored at G42.1. There is also a secondary hedge behind the front hedge that would require removal.
5. The site is referred to as unused, which I take to mean un-farmed but so are most of the other sites under consideration. This is the only area of completely unspoiled, wild land at the southern end of the village which provides a haven for wildlife and flora. It also forms a breathing space and barrier between housing and farming.
6. In the recent past, planning applications have been refused because the proposals were for back-land development. Back-land development is cited as a reason for rejecting site 1229. G42.1 would in part be back-land development behind 16, 17 & 18/19 Lynn Road.
7. Several alternative sites are rejected because they fall within the so called 'cordon sanitaire'. This is a totally spurious reason for excluding these sites from consideration. It relates to a small sewage treatment plant built to serve eight houses located in the fields. The plant is a very long distance away from sites 483 and 905 with at least 12 houses in between. The Parish Council have no record of any problems with smells from this treatment plant, whereas occasional smells have occurred at the southern end of the village from the sewage plant at the hotel.

Fred Rothwell

Respondent (127)

