
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 July 2025

by **N Bromley BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 August 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/L3245/W/25/3366740

16 Meadow Close, Bridgnorth, Shropshire WV16 5HY

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Ian Stanton, of IJS Installations Limited, against the decision of Shropshire Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00657/FUL.
 - The development proposed is erection of two accessible retirement bungalows on the side garden of the host building with associated landscaping and external works.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The Council's second and third reasons for refusal were with respect to the impact of the proposed development on adjacent trees. The appellant has provided an Arboricultural Impact Assessment, reference WTSL-AIA-4818 (the tree report), in order to address these two reasons for refusal. I acknowledge that the Council did not have the information with the original planning application, but the tree report does not materially alter the proposal, and it was submitted with the appeal submission in a timely manner. Therefore, I am satisfied that no party, including the Council who have viewed the additional information, would be prejudiced by my assessing the scheme with regard to it.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area,
 - the effect of the proposed development on existing trees, and
 - whether the proposed development provides an acceptable standard of living conditions for future occupants, with regard to outdoor amenity space.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal site forms the side garden of 16 Meadow Close, a two-storey detached house, at the end of a cul-de-sac of residential properties. The street comprises a mix of detached and semi-detached two storey dwellings and bungalows. There is a similar mix of properties within the surrounding area.

5. Residential dwellings in the locality are largely set within uniform plot sizes, set back from the road behind front gardens and with sizeable rear gardens. Houses located at the end of streets, such as the appeal site, or those occupying corner plot positions are set within larger plots, with spacious, landscaped gardens and frontage hedges. Overall, this gives the area a pleasant, spacious, and formal character and appearance.
6. In contrast, the proposed dwellings, which would be built up close to each side boundary, with a limited amount of space to the front and rear, would be cramped within the plot. In particular, the rear gardens would be small, with a shallow depth that would be uncharacteristic for the area and would exacerbate the cramped appearance of the development. As a result, the proposed development would sit uncomfortably within the plot and would not be in keeping with the pattern of development in the area.
7. Furthermore, the frontage of the site would be dominated by hardstandings and vehicle parking, which would be incongruous within the context of the open and verdant appearance of the street scene. There would also be no opportunity for meaningful planting to soften the appearance of the proposal within the street scene. In addition, one of the plots would have three parking spaces to the front, with one of the car parking spaces of the adjoining plot being parked directly in front of bedroom 2 of the other plot. This would be an unusual layout, which would not be an appropriate design solution.
8. For the reasons outlined above, I conclude that the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. Therefore, it would not accord with the design aims of Policy CS6 of the Shropshire Local Development Framework: Adopted Core Strategy, 2011 (CS) and Policy MD2 of the Shropshire Council Site Allocations and Management of Development Plan, December 2015 (SAMDev), which together and amongst other things, seek high design quality and development which respects and enhances local distinctiveness, and provides appropriate car parking provision.

Trees

9. A belt of visually significant trees is located at the end of the street beyond the side boundary. The trees have a high amenity value and provide a buffer between the residential area and the busy A458. A number of the trees overhang the site boundary, but the tree report demonstrates that the proposed development would be outside the Root Protection Area (RPA) of the trees.
10. A tree shadow plan, included in the tree report, suggests that the trees would shade a large section of the rear garden of the plot closest to the trees. The appellant has also submitted three-dimensional form models of the proposed development to illustrate the extent of overshadowing at the spring and autumn equinoxes and the summer solstice.
11. While I acknowledge that the three-dimensional form models appear to show a reduced level of overshadowing of the plot closest to the belt of trees, compared to the tree shadow plan, I am not satisfied that the information is robust. In addition, the models contradict the tree shadow plan. As such, on the evidence before me, I am not persuaded that the information can be relied upon and that the trees would not cause significant harm to the living conditions of future occupiers.

12. Consequently, due to the juxtaposition of one of the proposed bungalows with the belt of trees, as well as its orientation, I cannot be satisfied that the proposed development would not lead to future pressure on the removal of the adjacent belt of trees to improve the living conditions of future occupiers.
13. For the above reasons, I conclude that the evidence before me fails to demonstrate that the proposed development would not cause significant harm to existing trees. As such, the proposal conflicts with Policies CS6 and CS17 of the CS and Policies MD2 and MD12 of the SAMDev, which together and amongst other things, seek developments of high design quality that contributes to health and wellbeing, and avoid harm to natural assets, including trees.

Living conditions

14. The proposed bungalows would be a modest size. Each would have a private rear garden, which would provide an outdoor space for activities such as sitting out, drying clothes, and for children to play. However, the gardens are small, with a shallow depth, even for bungalows with only two bedrooms.
15. Furthermore, due to the juxtaposition and orientation of the garden closest to the adjacent belt of trees, the garden would be in shade for much of the day. Therefore, future occupiers would be deterred from using the space. On this basis, the available space would provide an unsatisfactory standard of outdoor amenity space for future occupiers.
16. For the above reasons and on the evidence before me, I conclude that an acceptable standard of living conditions for future occupants would not be provided, with regard to outdoor amenity space. Therefore, the proposal would not be in accordance with Policy CS6 of the CS and Policy MD2 of the SAMDev, which together and amongst other things, seek high design quality that contributes to health and wellbeing.

Other Matters

17. Two smaller, accessible bungalows, aimed at retired and people wishing to downsize, would contribute to boosting the supply of new housing, as referenced in the National Planning Policy Framework. There would also be social and economic benefits to local services during the construction and occupancy phases without conflict with neighbouring land uses. However, these benefits would be limited by virtue of the proposal only adding two dwellings to the housing supply in the area.
18. Taking all of the above matters into consideration, the benefits of the proposed development would not outweigh the identified harm that would be caused to the character and appearance of the area, existing trees and the living conditions of future occupants.
19. I acknowledge the appellants frustrations with regard to the Council's handling of the planning application. Nevertheless, I have considered the proposed development on its planning merits.

Conclusion

20. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposed development would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations, including the Framework, that indicate that the development should be determined

otherwise than in accordance with it. For these reasons, the appeal should be dismissed.

N Bromley

INSPECTOR