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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 October 2025

by **A O'Neill BA (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

**Decision date: 13 November 2025**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/L3245/W/25/3369392**

**Land on Nobold Lane, Nobold, Shrewsbury SY5 8NW**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs S Lloyd against the decision of Shropshire Council.
  - The application Ref is 25/01260/OUT.
  - The development proposed is described as: Outline planning application for 2 No detached dwellings with formation of shared access.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Preliminary Matter

2. The appeal scheme relates to an outline proposal, with access to be considered at this stage, and with all other matters reserved for future consideration. Plans have been submitted showing how development could be accommodated on the site. I have taken these plans into account for indicative purposes only.
3. The Council's reason for refusal does not cite any development plan policies in relation to the second main issue set out below. However, the Council's Conservation Officer comments references development plan policies which I have had regard to.

### Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
  - whether the site is in a suitable location, having regard to the Council's strategy for the location of housing and the site's access to services and facilities;
  - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area, with particular regard to the setting of the Grade II listed buildings known as Nobold Hall and Nobold Grange and the non-designated heritage asset known as Nobold Farmhouse; and,
  - whether the proposal would make effective use of agricultural land.

### Reasons

#### *Suitable location*

5. The Council's development strategy is set out in the Shropshire Local Development Framework: Adopted Core Strategy 2011 (the CS) and the Shropshire Council Site Allocations and Management of Development 2015 (the

SAMDev). SAMDev Policy MD1 identifies locations for sustainable development across the area.

6. The appeal site is located in the small settlement of Nobold. It is common ground between the main parties that Nobold is not a settlement which has been identified for new development in Policy MD1. The site is therefore located in open countryside for the purposes of planning policy. CS Policy CS5 and SAMDev Policy MD7a limit new residential development in the open countryside to a number of exceptions, none of which are applicable to this proposal. As such the site location does not accord with the Council's strategy for the location of housing.
7. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) expects development to promote walking, cycling, and the use of public transport, while recognising that sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas. There are no services or facilities within Nobold. Future occupiers would need to travel to Shrewsbury to access day to day services and facilities.
8. Access from the site to Shrewsbury is along Nobold Lane and then Longden Road. Nobold Lane is a narrow, unlit lane with no dedicated footpaths and it has a steep incline towards its junction with Longden Road. Longden Road also does not have dedicated footpaths or streetlights for much of its length between Nobold Lane and the edge of Shrewsbury. Furthermore, whilst there are employment facilities approximately 300 metres from the site, schools, retail and medical facilities are located in excess of 900 metres from the site. This would exceed a reasonable walking distance, particularly for young children travelling to school or when carrying shopping.
9. I understand that Longden Road forms part of National Cycle Route 44, however access to Longden Road from the site is not particularly attractive to cyclists given the lack of streetlighting and the steep incline of Nobold Lane. As such, I find that the site location does not provide a safe, convenient or attractive route for pedestrians or cyclists. I have not been provided with any evidence of public transport services between the site and Shrewsbury. Consequently, future occupiers would be reliant on private vehicles to access services and facilities.
10. The appellant asserts that the appeal site is located closer to Shrewsbury than a cluster of nearby settlements which are identified to accommodate further development in accordance with Policy CS4 of the CS. However, I note that Policy CS4 seeks to cluster new development alongside the enhancement of services and facilities within the locations identified in order to reduce the need to travel further afield. This consideration therefore does not lead me to an alternative conclusion on this matter.
11. I understand that a previous planning application for 2 dwellings at the site was recommended for approval subject to the completion of a Section 106 Agreement, prior to the adoption of the SAMDev (Application Reference 14/00425/OUT). However, the Section 106 Agreement was not completed, and consequently this application was refused following the adoption of the SAMDev. My attention has also been drawn to an approval for two dwellings located to the east of this appeal site (Planning Application reference 14/03050/OUT, 10 July 2014). However, I note that this application was also determined prior to the adoption of the SAMDev and in line with a previous version of the Framework. As such, these

considerations do not alter my conclusion on this matter which I have determined in accordance with the current development plan.

12. It is stated that previous planning applications on this site were not refused for reasons relating to its location. Be this as it may, in the context of the development plan policies before me now and the current version of the Framework, I have found that the site is not in a suitable location for housing.
13. Reference is made to an approved planning application for 1 dwelling adjacent to Karriholme on Nobold Lane (Planning application reference 20/03061, 30 November 2020). In that case the Council took the view not to follow the adopted development plan policies. I note that this site occupies a different location within the village, and I do not have details of the evidence on which this decision was made. I therefore do not know whether that example is directly comparable to the appeal proposal before me now. As such, this consideration does not alter my findings.
14. Permitting the proposed dwellings would be harmful in that the strategy for the distribution for housing would be undermined and the site location does not offer convenient access to sustainable travel. Given that the proposal is inconsistent with an important element of the Council's approach to development I have judged the magnitude of harm to be substantial.
15. Taking all of the above into account, I find that the appeal site is not in a suitable location having regard to the Council's strategy for the location of housing and its access to services and facilities. As such, the proposal conflicts with CS Policy CS5, SAMDev Policy MD7a, and the sustainable travel aims of the Framework, as set out above.

*Character and appearance with particular regard to the setting of the listed buildings and non-designated heritage asset*

16. The appeal site is open land located at the edge of Nobold. It forms part of the former agricultural holding associated with Nobold Farmhouse which is adjacent to the western boundary of the site and is a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA). Nobold Hall is located to the east of the site and Nobold Grange is located to the south on the opposite side of Nobold Lane, both of which are Grade II listed buildings. Nobold is a small settlement with sparse built development, surrounded by agricultural fields giving the area a traditional open, rural character and appearance.
17. Mindful of the statutory duty set out in s66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act), I have had special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of these listed buildings. Paragraph 216 of the Framework confirms that the effect on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should also be taken into account in determining an application.
18. Nobold Hall and Nobold Grange are both listed for their architectural interest. The Grange dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> Century and is of timber frame and brick construction. The Hall dates from the mid 18<sup>th</sup> Century and is finished in render over brick. Nobold Farmhouse is recorded as a historic farmstead in the Historic Environment Record. The appeal site's historic connection with the Farmhouse contributes to its significance. The settings of these 3 buildings are linked by Nobold Lane and the

appeal site. Collectively they make a significant contribution to the character of this part of the settlement.

19. The appellant's Heritage Impact Assessment (CJ Richards MBE Heritage Services, 18/03/2025) (HIA) recognises that the site contributes to the setting of the heritage assets. The HIA finds that the proposed development will alter the existing character of this part of Nobold and that this would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of the heritage assets. The assessment goes on to conclude that if the development is designed sensitively at the reserved matters stage, it would address the relevant requirements of the Framework and the development plan. However, this point is not further substantiated in the HIA.
20. In its undeveloped state, the site contributes positively to the character and appearance of the area and the setting of the heritage assets. The introduction of built development and the likely associated domestic paraphernalia to the site would detract from its open and rural character, thus also diminishing the setting of the heritage assets.
21. This proposal is in outline with only an indicative layout submitted. In the absence of the detailed design and layout of the proposed development, I cannot be satisfied that the proposal would preserve the setting of the adjacent heritage assets. The appellant suggests that the proposed dwellings would be set back into the site, ensuring views of Nobold Hall are not obstructed. However, this does not overcome the concerns that development on the site has the potential to harm the setting of all 3 heritage assets.
22. The fact that the impact on heritage assets was not identified in the reasons for refusal on previous planning applications on the site, does not alter my conclusion on this matter. In any event, I have a statutory duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings and the Framework requires me to consider the effect on the significance of the NDHA.
23. Taking all of the above into account, I find that the proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area, and it would fail to preserve the settings of the Grade II listed buildings Nobold Hall and Nobold Grange and the NDHA Nobold Farmhouse. As such it conflicts with CS Policies CS6 and CS17 and SAMDev Policies MD2 and MD17. Taken together, these policies require development to protect and enhance the local character of Shropshire's natural, built and historic environment including the context and character of heritage assets, their significance and setting.

### *Heritage balance*

24. Taking all of the above into account, I find the harm to the setting of the listed buildings to be less than substantial, but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight. Paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposed development. Paragraph 216 requires a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of any harm to a NDHA.
25. The proposal would deliver 2 new dwellings and deliver some economic uplift in the local economy during the construction process and from the future spending of occupiers. Generally, the provision of housing is a clear public benefit that carries

considerable weight, particularly in light of the Council's housing land supply position, set out below. However, the weight I give to this is lessened significantly by the fact that the proposal would only deliver 2 dwellings and by my conclusion that the appeal site is not in a suitable location having regard to the council's spatial strategy and its access to services and facilities. The economic benefits would also be limited. Therefore, these benefits do not outweigh the great weight that I give to the assets' conservation.

#### *Effective use of agricultural land*

26. The Council identifies the appeal site as grade 3 agricultural land. Although it does not set a presumption in favour against development on agricultural land, paragraph 187 of the Framework highlights the economic and other benefits of Best and Most Versatile agricultural land. The proposal would lead to the loss of agricultural land across the whole site. However, given the relatively small size of the site the associated economic and other benefits of the agricultural land in this case would be limited.
27. The Framework also seeks to make efficient use of land. However, this is subject to caveats that expect development to promote sustainable travel modes and do not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area. As I have concluded on the preceding main issues, the appeal site location would not promote sustainable travel modes. Furthermore, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area, and it would fail to preserve the setting of the adjacent heritage assets. As such, it does not represent an efficient use of land in the context of the Framework.
28. For the reasons given, while the proposed development would result in the loss of agricultural land, the harm to the associated economic and other benefits would be limited. However, the proposal would not represent an efficient use of land and, as I have set out above, I attach significant weight to the harm associated with the appeal site location and the proposal's impact on character and appearance, including the setting of the heritage assets.

#### **Other Matters**

29. The proposed development would have limited social and economic benefits. Two additional houses would make a positive, albeit limited, contribution to the overall supply of housing, as would the support that their construction and future occupancy would provide to construction employment and the local economy. I therefore attribute these benefits limited weight in the planning balance.
30. Concerns regarding the way in which the Council dealt with the application and presented its reason for refusal fall outside the scope of this decision.

#### **Planning Balance**

31. The appeal site location conflicts with CS Policy CS5 and SAMDev Policy MD7a, and the sustainable travel aims of the Framework. The proposal also conflicts with CS Policies CS6 and CS17 and SAMDev Policies MD2 and MD17 insofar as they require development to protect and enhance the local character, including the historic environment.
32. Paragraph 225 of the Framework makes it clear that due weight should be given to existing policies according to their degree of consistency with the Framework. In

this respect the Framework expects development to promote sustainable travel modes, such as walking and cycling, that limit future car use. Furthermore the Framework recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource, which should be conserved in a manner appropriate to the significance. Finally, the countryside is not protected for its own sake, but its intrinsic character and beauty is recognised by the Framework which also indicates development should maintain the prevailing setting and character. Therefore, the conflict between the proposal and Policies CS5, MD7a, CS6, CS17, MD2 and MD17 should be given significant weight in this appeal.

33. In circumstances where the Council cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites, footnote 8 of the Framework establishes that the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of-date. The approach in paragraph 11 d)(i) of the Framework is therefore engaged. This states that planning permission should be granted unless the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed. Footnote 7 of the Framework confirms the policies referred to are those in the Framework relating to, amongst others, designated heritage assets.
34. The Council has confirmed it has a current supply of 4.68 years. As described above, the social and economic benefits of 2 dwellings would be limited, even taking into account the Framework's objective of significantly boosting housing land supply. For the reasons set out above, I find that the application of policies in the Framework that protect designated heritage assets provides a strong reason for refusing the proposal. As a result, the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply in this instance.

### **Conclusion**

35. For the reasons given above, the proposal would fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act and it would conflict with the development plan as a whole. There are no material considerations, including the Framework, that indicate that a decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*A O'Neill*

INSPECTOR