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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 November 2025

**by Samuel Watson BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

**Decision date: 17 December 2025**

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### **Appeal Ref: 6000949**

### **17 St Marys Road and Wheatland Garage, Much Wenlock TF13 6AG**

- 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 J Corbo against the decision of Shropshire Council.
  - The application Ref is 25/01576/FUL.
  - The development proposed is the change of use of C3 dwelling to storage associated with service station and use of rear amenity to form parking area with EV chargers.
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### **Decision**

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for change of use of C3 dwelling to storage associated with service station and use of rear amenity to form parking area with EV chargers at 17 St Marys Road and Wheatland Garage, Much Wenlock TF13 6AG in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 25/01576/FUL, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

### **Main Issues**

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on:
  - The provision of housing within Much Wenlock;
  - The character and appearance of the street scene;
  - The living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, with particular regard to noise; and,
  - Highway safety.

### **Reasons**

#### *Housing Provision*

3. The appeal site is located in Much Wenlock, an identified Market Town. Within Market Towns the development plan directs development and seeks to protect facilities, services, and amenities in order to maintain their traditional role in providing services and employment. There is a further focus upon directing residential development to these Market Towns. However, the plan does not set out any specific requirements to protect residential development from conversion or other loss.
4. In particular, Policies CS1, CS6 and CS11<sup>1</sup>, and Policies MD1 and MD3<sup>2</sup> do not require evidence demonstrating a dwelling is no longer suitable for residential use or that the proposed use is essential. The national Planning Policy Framework (the

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<sup>1</sup> Shropshire Local Development Framework: Adopted Core Strategy (the ACS)

<sup>2</sup> Shropshire Council Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan

Framework) similarly seeks to boost the supply of housing but does not set out any specific controls or requirements for the loss of housing.

5. I am mindful that the Council can only currently demonstrate a 4.7-year housing land supply. This under provision is modest and the proposed loss, of only one dwelling, would not significantly affect the existing provision or compromise the Council's strategy for housing. The proposal would also contribute to the expansion of an existing commercial business in line with the Council's aims to maintain and enhance the provision of services and employment within Market Towns.
6. In all, therefore, I find that the proposed loss of one residential dwelling would not unacceptably affect the supply of housing within Much Wenlock but would help support its provision of services and employment. The proposal therefore complies with ACS Policies CS1, CS6, CS11 and SAMDev Policies MD1 and MD3 as outlined above. It also complies with the Framework, including Paragraphs 61-84 regarding the delivery of a sufficient supply of housing.

### *Character and Appearance*

7. The appeal site sits within a predominantly residential area adjacent to an existing service station located at the edge of Much Wenlock. St Marys Road is characterised primarily by short terraces of dwellings set back from the road by front gardens, some of which are used for parking. The appeal dwelling itself is an end of terrace property that has been extended by way of a single-storey side and rear extension. The front garden has also partially been set aside for parking. The service station is fairly typical in its utilitarian design, being a single-storey building served by a large forecourt which wraps around the Bridgenorth Road and St Marys Road sides of the site. The area closest to No 17 is set aside for parking. It is separated from the appeal site by a low wall.
8. The proposed changes to the rear garden of No 17 would be significant with both the visual appearance of the garden and the character of its using being changed. The removal of the wraparound extension would open up views to the rear of No 17 allowing these changes to be appreciated more readily. Although vehicles parking within the main forecourt area would partially screen views to the rear of No 17 they would not block them. However, I am mindful that the appeal site is already closely related to the service station and its associated parking. Moreover, the appeal site is at the end of the terrace, and road, where some variation in appearance can more easily be accommodated. Overall, these changes would not be so significant as to unacceptably affect the character and appearance of the surrounding area and street scene.
9. The use of the dwelling for storage associated with the service station would affect the way in which it is used, lit and the types of noises associated with the property. It is, for instance, unlikely that the noise and lighting effects of a television or the smells from cooking would occur at the property following conversion. There would also likely be some change in the comings and goings associated with the property. However, these changes would be modest and most likely only appreciated by those living closest to the property rather than passersby. For those walking or driving past I see no reason to believe that the property would not appear as if it was still a dwelling. In this way, and given the scale of the change in

relation to the street as a whole, the proposal would not affect the character of the street scene.

10. The proposed development, including the change of use, would not unacceptably affect the character and appearance of the surrounding area and street scene. The proposal therefore complies with ACS Policy CS6 and SAMDev Policy MD2 which require proposals to respect and respond appropriately to local distinctiveness and the built environment with regard to scale, design and pattern. It also complies with the Framework, including Paragraph 135 which requires proposals to be sympathetic to local character and maintain a strong sense of place.

### *Living Conditions*

11. At the time of my visit there was a degree of noise stemming from vehicles making use of Bridgnorth Road, St Marys Road and the service station. This was audible across the appeal site, including the rearmost portion of No 17's garden. I am mindful that my site visit provides only a snapshot in time however, and it is likely that this level of background noise would be greater during rush hours and lower overnight.
12. Although the engine noises and revving associated with manoeuvring internal combustion engine vehicles is not present with electric vehicles, they will nevertheless make some noise while approaching and manoeuvring. Many electric vehicles are also fitted with noise emitting devices to alert pedestrians of their presence and additional noise would occur from the opening and closing of doors. There is further potential for noise from car occupants talking and from music or other entertainment being played within the vehicle.
13. Although these noises already occur across much of the appeal site, they do not in the rear garden of No 17. The proposal would bring vehicles and their associated noise much closer to the neighbouring properties and, in particular, the attached neighbour at No 18 St Marys Road. However, given the existing background noise, it is unlikely that noise from the proposed use would unacceptably disrupt the typical daytime activities of neighbouring occupiers to the detriment of their living conditions when in their property or garden.
14. Nevertheless, at night when background noise levels are typically lower, it is likely that the movement of vehicles, the chargers and their use would disturb neighbouring occupiers to the detriment of their living conditions. I am content however, that this impact could be mitigated by way of a condition limiting the hours of operation.
15. Only limited information has been provided as to the nature of the storage use proposed for No 17. However, irrespective of what is stored, noise would be generated from staff entering and exiting the property, placing, retrieving and moving stored items and from any socialising occurring during this. I find it likely that some degree of noise would be audible, especially for any activities outside. During the day it is unlikely to be so loud as to be intrusive over typical domestic background noises. This is especially so when considered against noises typically generated within a domestic property such as from a television, children playing or music. However, should deliveries or stock movements take place when these domestic activities do not typically occur, such as overnight, these noise levels would be disruptive to the detriment of the living conditions at No 18. I am, nevertheless, content that a suitable condition could prevent any such harm.

16. The proposal would not unacceptably accept the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers as a result of the change of use at No 17 or the expansion of the vehicle forecourt. The proposal therefore complies with ACS Policy CS6 that requires proposals to be of a high quality design that safeguards residential amenity and wellbeing. Although the Council have also referred to the Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan 2013-26 (the NP), it does not appear that this document directly relates to the matters upon which this issue turns.

### *Highway Safety*

17. As set out above, the appeal site contains an operating service station offering parking, a shop and fuel filling. At the time of my visit, it was clear that all three elements were in use. The site is served by three vehicular accesses: one off Bridgnorth Road and two on to St Marys Road. These all appeared to offer access and egress to the site.
18. The proposed electric vehicle charging area would be to the rear of the site and somewhat detached from the rest of the parking provision. However, given the small nature of the site it would still be well related to the shop and other parked vehicles. I am content, therefore that future users would not be so located as to be unsafe. By restricting the hours of use, this would further ensure the safety of future users overnight.
19. I am content that vehicles would be able to manoeuvre within the electric vehicle area so as to enter and exit it in a forward gear. Given the nature of recharging, which can take much longer than fuel filling, the level of movements in and out of this area is also likely to be much lower. Given the layout of the site, it is likely that electric vehicles would make use of the entrance closest to No 17 to enter and leave the site. Similarly, it is likely that those using the fuel filling area would make use of the other two entrances. It is, therefore, unlikely that there would be an unacceptable increase in cross movements that could lead to conflict between the routes. Overall, it is unlikely that there would be such an intensification of the site's use as to generate an unacceptable impact on highway safety on or around the appeal site.
20. I note the concerns raised by the Council's highways team as to the safety of the path running from St Marys Road to the electric vehicle charging area. I find similarly that vehicles could park across or otherwise obstruct this route. However, the existing forecourt does not have a continuous pedestrian route and so pedestrians currently need to walk across the forecourt to reach the shop. The proposed path, which is unlikely to be regularly obstructed, will therefore be an improvement to this arrangement.
21. The proposal would not unacceptably affect highway safety or the safety of those pedestrians and motorists using the appeal site. It therefore complies with ACS Policies CS6 and CS7 that require high quality, safe and appropriate car parking provision. The proposal also complies with the Framework, including Paragraphs 116 and 117 that together seek for proposals to minimise the opportunity for conflict between pedestrians and vehicles while also providing safe, accessible and convenient locations for electric vehicle charging.

## **Other Matters**

22. I note that the appeal site is adjacent to the Much Wenlock Conservation area. Having regard to my statutory duty, I am satisfied that the relationship of the appeal proposal to this heritage asset would have a neutral effect upon its setting. Harm to the significance of the nearby heritage would not, therefore, occur. It is noteworthy that the Council did not raise the impact on the nearby heritage asset as a concern when it refused the planning application.

## **Conditions**

23. I have had regard to the conditions suggested by the Council and the advice on planning conditions set out by the Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance. In the interests of clarity and enforceability, I have made some changes to the wording.
24. For certainty, I have set out the timescale of the commencement of development. A condition is also necessary, for certainty and enforceability, requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans.
25. I have also attached conditions restricting the times at which the chargers and storage area can be used in the interests of the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers. To help protect the character and appearance of the area a condition is also necessary preventing any storage outside of No 17. I have reworded this condition so that it only covers that area of the appeal site that was formerly a residential property. Also, in the interests of the character and appearance of the surrounding area it is necessary to remove permitted development rights for the erection of boundary treatments.
26. The splitting of the proposed storage use from the service station would likely result in changes to parking requirements and the way in which the building is used. These changes could result in unacceptable impacts to the detriment of the character and appearance of the surrounding area, living conditions and highway safety. Similar changes could occur should the building be opened up for visiting members of the public. I have therefore attached a condition controlling these matters.

## **Conclusion**

27. There are no material considerations that indicate the appeal should be determined other than in accordance with the development plan. For the reasons given above, I therefore conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

*Samuel Watson*

INSPECTOR

## **SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS**

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall be begun not later than three years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with drawings: Site Local Plan, 4298-99 and 4298-07B.

- 3) The electric vehicle charging points hereby permitted shall only be available for use between the hours of 06:00 and 22:00 daily. Outside these hours, the charging points shall not be operational.
- 4) No deliveries to, or collections from, the storage use hereby permitted at No 17 St Marys Road shall take place outside the hours of 07:00 and 19:00 daily.
- 5) At no time shall goods, materials, or equipment be stored in the open on any part of the site associated with the former dwelling at No 17 St Marys Road, namely that land as shown in yellow on the site location plan.
- 6) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that order with or without modification), no fences, walls, gates or other means of enclosure shall be erected on the site without prior written consent of the local planning authority.
- 7) The storage use hereby permitted shall be ancillary to the operation of Wheatland Service Station only and shall not be used for any purpose that involves visiting members of the public.