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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 December 2025

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

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 January 2026

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**Appeal Ref: 6001247**

**The Chestnuts, Cruckton, Shrewsbury SY5 8PW**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant permission in principle.
  - The appeal is made by T Carron against the decision of Shropshire Council.
  - The application Ref is 25/02789/PIP.
  - The development proposed is Permission in Principle for construction of between two and four dwellings.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Preliminary Matters

2. The Planning Practice Guidance advises that the Permission in Principle route is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development. It has two stages: the first stage (or permission in principle stage) establishes whether a site is suitable in-principle, and the second ('technical details consent') stage is when the detailed development proposals are assessed. This appeal relates to the first of these two stages.
3. The scope of the considerations for permission in principle is limited to location, land use and the amount of development permitted. All other matters are considered as part of a subsequent technical details consent application if the first stage is granted. I have determined the appeal accordingly.
4. The Government launched a consultation on reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) in December 2025, but as the proposals are still subject to change, they carry little weight. Accordingly, the decision was made with reference to the December 2024 version of the Framework.

### Main Issues

5. Whether the location, the proposed land use and the amount of development is suitable for residential development, having particular regard to (a) the development plan strategy for housing and access to services and facilities, and (b) the effect on the character and appearance of the area.

### Reasons

#### *Development strategy and sustainable location*

6. The appeal site comprises an area of garden land associated with the host property, The Chestnuts. The host property is a large, detached dwelling which

fronts the B4386 road. There are other residential dwellings along the road but houses in the wider landscape are generally sporadic, and the surrounding area has a prevailing rural character.

7. Policy CS1 of the Shropshire Local Development Framework: Adopted Core Strategy 2011 (the CS) outlines the strategic approach to development across the County. The strategy includes seeking to ensure that rural areas will become more sustainable through a rural rebalance approach, which includes accommodating around 35% of the area's residential development in rural areas over the plan period. Such development will be located predominantly in Community Hubs and Community Clusters. Outside these settlements, development will primarily be for economic diversification and to meet the needs of the local communities for affordable housing.
8. The appeal site is not within a settlement, and it is therefore located within the open countryside. While located within the open countryside, the edge of Shrewsbury is nearby and there is other development along the road. Within this context, the proposed development would not be functionally separate from other development. Given this, and with due regard to the cited judgment<sup>1</sup>, the site is not within an isolated countryside location.
9. Policy CS5 of the CS, allows new development in the open countryside only where it maintains and enhances countryside vitality and character and improves the sustainability of rural communities, particularly where it relates to certain types of development. One such type of development is the provision of affordable housing / accommodation to meet a local need.
10. Policy MD7(a) of the Site Allocations and Management of Development Plan, December 2015 (the SAMDev) states that new market housing will be strictly controlled outside of Shrewsbury, the Market Towns, Key Centres and Community Hubs and Clusters. It sets out various types of residential development that would be permitted in the countryside. Policy CS11 of the CS also sets out the Council's approach to meeting the diverse housing needs of Shropshire residents now and in the future to create mixed, balanced and inclusive communities.
11. Even though it is suggested that one of the houses could be an affordable dwelling, there is no substantiated evidence that the proposal would relate to the certain types of development listed within the identified development plan policies.
12. The nearest named settlement to the appeal site is Cruckton, at approximately 1.2 kilometres away. Cruckton is not listed as a Community Cluster Settlement in Policy MD1 of the SAMDev and information in respect of the services, facilities and public transport opportunities on offer within Cruckton or nearby is limited.
13. Furthermore, the B4386 carries fast moving traffic and it has no pavements or street lighting. In combination with the distance to Cruckton and other settlements such as Hanwood, future occupiers of the proposed development would be discouraged from walking and cycling to access services and amenities within those settlements.
14. Likewise, for similar reasons to those set out above, access to the edge of Shrewsbury on foot would not be desirable due to safety concerns. Future

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<sup>1</sup> Braintree DC v SSCLG, Greyread Ltd & Granville Developments Ltd [2018] EWCA Civ 610

occupiers would also have to navigate the A5 roundabout which has no pavements or safe crossing points. In these circumstances and without any details of the availability of public transport opportunities nearby, the proposal would not offer a genuine choice of transport or prioritise sustainable transport modes. Consequently, future occupiers of the proposed development would be highly dependent on the use of private cars for their day-to-day needs.

15. Reference has been made to new residential developments nearby at Horton Lodge Farm and the former Hare and Hounds public house. However, there are limited details of the circumstances of those two cases, which makes it difficult to draw comparisons between those developments and the appeal scheme before me. Indeed, the appellant suggests that the Horton Lodge Farm development comprised conversions to listed buildings, which is a notable contrast to the appeal scheme before me. I am also mindful that there were likely to be other material considerations at play in respect of the former Hare and Hounds development which would differentiate it from the appeal scheme before me. Within this context and on the lack of evidence before me, I attach limited weight to those examples nearby.
16. While the Framework states that opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, the site would not offer a choice of transport use. It is also not clear to what extent the proposal would enhance or maintain the vitality of the nearby community. Therefore, and notwithstanding the comments of the appellant regarding the locational aspects of the Hare and Hounds development, as I am required to do, I have determined the case before me on the site-specific circumstances and on its own merits.
17. For the above reasons, I conclude that the location, the proposed land use and the amount of development is not suitable for residential development, having particular regard to the development plan strategy for housing and access to services and facilities. It would thereby conflict with Policies CS1, CS5 and CS11 of the CS and Policies MD1 and MD7(a) of the SAMDev. It would also conflict with the overall plan-led approach of the Framework.

#### *Character and appearance*

18. Despite its location on a busy road, the garden is largely screened from view by the tall frontage hedgerow. As the side garden of the host property the appeal site also has a domestic character, viewed within the context of the existing large, detached house.
19. There are other residential properties that front the road, but houses in the area are generally sporadic, consisting of pairs of dwellings, set within large plots. There are large spacious gaps in between the pairs of houses and groups of farm buildings, and the area has an open, rural character, comprising open fields, bounded by tall hedgerows.
20. The proposed housing on the land would noticeably extend the amount of built development adjacent to the existing pair of detached dwellings, reducing the gap between the next pair of dwellings along the road. In addition, the proposal would introduce a reasonable amount of built form within the landscape. Particularly in the context of the spacious and open appearance of the surroundings.

21. Due to the scale of the development and its juxtaposition next to existing houses, the harm to the landscape would be tempered. The re-use of existing garden land would also reduce the effect of the development on the landscape. Also, dwellings nearby range in age, style and appearance, and various matters can be agreed at the technical details consent stage, including the scale and appearance of the proposed dwellings.
22. Furthermore, the proposed dwellings could be designed to front the road, in a linear pattern, and a soft landscaping scheme could include the retention of the frontage hedgerow. As a consequence, the harm to the landscape would be relatively localised, and I attach modest weight to the identified harm to the character and appearance of the area.
23. In the context of the above considerations, I conclude that the appeal site would not be an appropriate location for the development proposed, due to the resultant harm to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would therefore conflict with Policies CS6 and CS17 of the CS and Policies MD2 and MD12 of the SAMDev, which together and amongst other things requires development to respond appropriately to the form and layout of existing development and should contribute to and respect locally distinctive or valued character.

### **Planning Balance and Conclusion**

24. There is disagreement between the main parties regarding the current housing land supply position. Indeed, the Council identify that they can demonstrate 4.73 years, whereas the appellant suggests that the figure is 4.46 years. Either way, the Council cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of housing land. This is a change in position since a previous appeal decision on the site<sup>2</sup>.
25. While the short fall is modest, the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out at Paragraph 11(d) of the Framework applies. In these circumstances, paragraph 11(d)(ii) of the Framework states that planning permission should be granted unless any adverse effects of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.
26. In this regard, the Framework seeks rural housing to be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities, while also seeking to direct development towards locations with good access to services and facilities and ensure that sustainable transport modes are prioritised. The Framework also seeks the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places, that are sympathetic to local character.
27. The proposal would not prioritise alternative modes of travel and it would not enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. There would also be some harm to the landscape. Therefore, despite only modest harm to the landscape, overall, the conflict between the proposal and Policies CS1, CS5, CS6, CS11 and CS17 of the CS and Policies MD1, MD2, MD7(a) and MD12 of the SAMDev should be given significant weight in this appeal.
28. While the development of previously developed land is supported by the Framework, this is tempered heavily in this case as the appeal site is not located

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<sup>2</sup> Appeal Reference: APP/L3245/W/17/3185134

within a settlement. Nevertheless, the proposed development for up to four new dwellings on garden land would make efficient use of land and contribute to boosting the supply of new housing. As a small site the development could also be delivered relatively quickly.

29. It has not been demonstrated that the proposal would meet a local need, but any technical details consent could secure one of the dwellings as affordable housing, adding to the mix and supply of such housing in the rural area. There would also be associated social and economic benefits during the period of construction and once the dwellings are occupied, including supporting local businesses. In combination, and in the context of the shortfall in housing land, the benefits attract considerable positive weight in my determination. However, due to the small-scale nature of the proposed development the benefits of the scheme would attract moderate weight overall.
30. Consequently, the adverse impacts of the proposal would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole. Therefore, the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply.
31. I have considered the appeal decisions for residential development submitted by the appellant<sup>3</sup>, and the planning balance undertaken by each Inspector for each of those cases. However, as I am required to do, I have assessed the appeal scheme on the evidence before me and on its own merits.
32. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposed development would conflict with the development plan when considered 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. Accordingly, the appeal should be dismissed.

*N Bromley*

INSPECTOR

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<sup>3</sup> Appeal References: APP/H1840/W/24/3350993; APP/C1055/W/24/3356476 and APP/L3245/W/25/3358745