

APPLICATION 25/02775/OUT PLANNING REPORT ADDENDUM

Addendum to Committee Report for Application 25/02775/OUT heard by the Northern Planning Committee on the 21st July 2026.

Purpose of this Addendum

This addendum has been produced to address and mitigate the material planning concerns raised by Members at the previous planning committee meeting. These concerns relate to access via Aston Road; access via Church Lane; Active Travel, Public Transport and possibility of a link road.

In addition, since the Northern Planning Committee meeting of the 21st July 2026, the Government has published the new NPPF (August 2026), which has replaced the previous version referred to in the Committee Report.

The addendum is set out in the following sections:

1. NPPF
2. Highways and Active Travel
3. Loss of Agricultural Land (BMV)
4. Heritage and Mineral Safeguarding Tests
5. Planning balance
6. Conclusion
7. Appendices
 - 1 – Highway Authority consultation addendum
 - 2 – Applicant's Highway clarification note
 - 3 – Consultations/Representations received since Committee meeting of the 21st July 2026. These will be reported in the Schedule of Additional Letters

NPPF 2026

A revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on Monday 17th August 2026. This replaces the previous version which has been referred to in the Committee Report. The references to the former 2025 NPPF and its policies in the Committee Report are therefore now out-of-date and should be disregarded.

Officers have assessed the planning application in relation to the revised NPPF and provide the following updated advice to Members. In summary, it is the advice of Officers

that the revised NPPF does not fundamentally change the planning balance, or the recommendation to Members that planning permission should be granted.

Policy/Principle

Planning policy context/principle of development within the Committee Report should be replaced by the following:

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material planning consideration. It states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, by managing the use and development of land in the long-term

public interest. It states that 'achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives in providing for the homes, commercial development, facilities and infrastructure which society needs. These objectives are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across all three)':

The revised NPPF includes the following policies and objectives of relevance to the proposed development.

Policy S3: Presumption in favour of sustainable development states that decisions on development proposals should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development (Chapter 4).

- Policy S5.1 states that, outside settlements, only certain forms of development should be approved. These should be approved, unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework.

Under S5.1 (h) the NPPF states:

h. Residential and mixed-use development which would:

- i. Be within reasonable walking distance of a well-connected station (applying the definitions in the glossary at Annex B);
- ii. Be physically well-related to the station or the settlement within which the station is located;
- iii. Be of a scale which can be accommodated taking into account the existing or proposed availability of infrastructure; and
- iv. Not prejudice any proposals for long-term comprehensive development in the same location.

Under S5.1.(j) the NPPF states:

Development which would address an evidenced unmet need (including, but not limited to, development proposals involving the provision of housing where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites or scores below 75% in the most recent Housing Delivery Test), and where the development would:

- i. Be physically well-related to an existing settlement (unless the nature of the development would make this inappropriate) and be of a scale which can be accommodated taking into account the existing or proposed availability of infrastructure; or

Policy S5.2 states that in applying this policy, the circumstances in which the benefits of approving development proposals are likely to be substantially outweighed by adverse effects include, but are not restricted to, situations where the development proposal would fail to comply with one of the national decision-making policies which state that development proposals should be refused in specific circumstances.

Traffic and access

TR3: Locating development in sustainable locations

1. So that development is located where it can support sustainable patterns of movement, enable good accessibility for different users and make the most of existing and proposed transport infrastructure, development proposals should reflect the following principles, taking into account the vision for the site, the type of development and its location:

a. Development proposals which could generate a significant amount of movement, in the context of the area within which they would be situated, should be in locations that are sustainable (or which can be made so, taking into account planned improvements, including any provided for as part of the development itself). This means the location should limit the need to travel, particularly by private car, and offer a genuine choice of

transport modes for residents and users, unless the nature of the development would make this impractical;

b. Opportunities should be taken to utilise existing or proposed transport infrastructure in optimising the amount or density of development which can be accommodated in different locations, especially where this can support more walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport use;

c. Any significant adverse impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, should be mitigated to an acceptable degree using a vision-led approach;

d. The environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure should be identified,

assessed and taken into account – including taking opportunities to avoid or mitigate any adverse environmental effects, and to secure net environmental gains such as reductions in air pollution; and

e. In rural areas, opportunities to improve walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport

and enhance the connectivity of an area should be taken where they exist and can be supported by the development proposed.

The reference to paragraph 116 of the NPPF in the Committee Report at 6.2.2 should be replaced with the following:

Policy TR3c of the NPPF states “Any significant adverse impacts from the development

on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, should be mitigated to an acceptable degree using a vision-led approach”.

Residential amenity and pollution

NPPF Policy P3 (Living conditions and pollution) states:

- Development proposals should be appropriate for their location, taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, whether these effects are on or off-site;

and whether this is as a result of the development itself or the product of preexisting conditions in its vicinity. In assessing the potential effects of pollution, consideration should be given to the potential sensitivity of the site, and its intended occupiers and users, as well as that of the environment and population in the surrounding area (including where certain groups could be particularly vulnerable to its effects, such as children and older people)

This new national policy does not fundamentally affect the Officer assessment of the application as set out in the Committee Report.

Highways Considerations and Active Travel

At the previous Committee meeting, Member raised a number of questions/concerns in regard to highways considerations and active travel.

The Local Highway Authority has issued a clarification note attached to this addendum, which explains the rationale of the Highway Authority. This explains a number of the concerns Members raised in regard to access onto Aston Road, justification in regards to the unsuitability of having an access onto Church Lane, active travel improvements which would promote and maximise opportunities for a choice of a means of transport for future occupants,

Active Travel guidance states that a mix of local amenities should be located within an 800m walking and wheeling distance (using well-designed routes) of all residential properties or staff entrances for workplace facilities.

The guidance states that footpaths/ways to local amenities should conform to the National Design Guide standards of being safe, direct, convenient and accessible for people of all abilities, which includes but is not limited to routes that:

- have a minimum width of 2m, with limited pinch points no less than 1.5m;
- are step-free;
- have a smooth, even surface;
- have seating at regular intervals;
- are uncluttered;
- have good natural surveillance and clear lines of sight;

Local planning authorities must weigh the economic and housing benefits of a proposal against its accessibility, active travel connectivity, and long-term carbon reduction impacts.

Loss Of Agricultural Land (BMV)

Policy E2 of the NPPF 2026 introduces heightened scrutiny for domestic food production and national food security. However, because the total site area falls below the 20-hectare threshold required for a statutory consultation with Natural England, the loss is localized. While it conflicts with the framework's mandate to protect soil resources, it is not an insurmountable scale of loss.

The primary conflict in this application rests between the loss of Best and Most Versatile agricultural land and the acute need for housing delivery. While the NPPF strengthens protections for high-quality food-producing soils, it does not create a blanket veto on development where a severe housing shortfall exists. When assessed against the framework as a whole, the irreversible loss of this BMV acreage is a notable disbenefit. However, in the absence of a wider Green Belt or high-tier landscape protection (such as an AONB), the loss of agricultural soil on its own does not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the substantial benefits of providing

immediate, deliverable market and affordable housing. Therefore, the presumption in favour of development prevails.

The Heritage & Mineral Safeguarding Tests

The NPPF (2026) at HE4: Securing the conservation of heritage assets states:

1. Heritage assets, as an irreplaceable resource, should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. To achieve this, development proposals which would affect the significance of heritage assets, including any contribution made by their setting should:
 - a. Maintain or secure a use consistent with their conservation, taking into account the importance of maintaining the assets, the positive contribution they can make to sustainable communities including local economies, and the positive contribution they can make to local character and distinctiveness; and
 - b. Avoid (or if that is not possible, minimise) harm to the significance of heritage assets, and instead conserve this significance.
2. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (including from development within its setting) should have a clear and convincing justification in accordance with the policies in this chapter.
3. Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the asset should not be taken into account in any decision relating to the asset.
4. Proposals for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with other policies in this Framework and/or those in the development plan, but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, should be considered on the basis of whether the conservation benefits outweigh the disbenefits of departing from the policies concerned.

The NPPF at HE6: Proposals affecting designated heritage assets in part states:

1. When considering the potential effect of a development proposal on the significance of a designated heritage asset, substantial weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential effect amounts to a positive effect, harm, substantial harm, or total loss of its significance.
2. Development proposals which would have a positive effect on a designated heritage asset should be supported.
3. Any harm to a designated heritage asset will be a matter of considerable importance and weight, which should be dealt with in accordance with paragraphs 4 to 6 of this policy.
4. Where a development proposal would harm the significance of a designated heritage asset the effect on the asset and its significance should be weighed against any public benefits resulting from the proposal. Important public benefits can include securing the long-term reuse of a vacant or underused listed building, and enabling energy efficiency

and low carbon heating measures to be employed.

Specific restrictive policies regarding heritage and mineral preservation must be evaluated.

The localized "less than substantial" heritage harm is decisively outweighed by the exceptional public benefits of the scheme (double the affordable housing, active travel infrastructure, and elevated BNG).

Regarding the Mineral Safeguarding Area, while Shropshire Council Policy MD16 aims to prevent the permanent sterilisation of mineral resources, a rigid refusal on mineral grounds would entirely conflict with the council's requirement to address its 4.61-year housing land supply deficit. Because the site directly abuts an existing settlement, mineral extraction on a commercial scale would likely be heavily constrained by its proximity to existing residential properties.

Therefore, the mineral and heritage policy hurdles are passed.

Planning Balance

Housing & Affordable Housing Delivery	The proposal delivers market and affordable housing on a 12.96-hectare site. The applicant has committed to providing 20% affordable housing—effectively doubling the required provision. Given Shropshire's severe 5YHLS deficit (currently at 4.61 years), this directly aligns with the NPPF 2026 mandate to aggressively boost supply.	Very Significant Positive Weight
Settlement Connectivity & Spatial Strategy	The 12.96-hectare site directly abuts the existing settlement boundary. Because it forms a continuous physical extension of the established built-up area, it avoids the risks of isolated rural housing. It ensures that new residents can directly access existing local services, community infrastructure, and utility networks, reinforcing	Significant to Moderate Positive Weight

	sustainable development principles.	
Connectivity & Sustainable Transport	Comprehensive off-site Active Travel improvements are proposed to link the site directly into nearby transit corridors and settlement services, aligning with the council's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).	Significant to moderate Positive Weight
Ecological Enhancement & BNG	Commitment to a significant BNG provision. The development proposes a net gain of 4.21 (12.07%) habitat units, 5.46 (28.56%) hedgerow units and 0.16 (14.08%) watercourse units. This is significantly in excess of the 10% statutory requirement across the 12.96-hectare footprint, ensuring a long-term ecological uplift.	Significant Positive Weight
Heritage Assets Resulting in a "less than substantial" harm to the setting/significance of a nearby heritage asset.	In accordance with HE6 (4) of the NPPF, this harm must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal	Moderate Negative Weight (Statutory hurdle).
Best & Most Versatile (BMV) Agricultural Land	Permanent loss of 12.96 hectares of BMV agricultural land. While the NPPF 2026 prioritises food security, the footprint remains well under the 20-hectare threshold requiring mandatory statutory consultation with Natural England.	Moderate Negative Weight
Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA)	The site falls within a designated MSA under Shropshire SAMDev Policy MD16. Full extraction prior to development is considered unfeasible to its proximity to Wem.	Minor Negative Weight

Countryside & Greenfield Impact	Conversion of open countryside outside defined development boundaries. Under the NPPF (2026) local spatial boundaries are deemed out-of-date due to the housing supply deficit.	Minor to Moderate Negative Weight.
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The application must be approved unless adverse impacts significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The primary conflict rests between the permanent loss of 12.96 hectares of countryside which is also Best and Most Versatile agricultural land and the localized impacts on heritage and minerals, versus the benefits of the development. Crucially, the fact that the site directly abuts the existing settlement significantly reduces the landscape and spatial harm normally associated with greenfield developments. It allows the proposal to function as a natural, sustainable extension of the town or village rather than a detached intrusion into the open countryside. When assessed against the policies of the Framework as a whole, the collective adverse impacts do not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the wide-ranging public benefits of securing a robust mix of market housing, a 20% affordable housing (over-delivery), optimized active travel links, and high-tier ecological net gains. The presumption in favour of sustainable development is clearly maintained.

Conclusion

The Local Planning Authority Planning Officer recommends that Outline Planning Permission be GRANTED, subject to a Section 106 legal agreement securing the on-site affordable housing (20%), off-site active travel infrastructure, and a 30-year BNG management plan, and any other necessary planning provisions, alongside planning conditions to be agreed in consultation with consultees and the applicant.