



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 April 2026

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

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 April 2026

Appeal Ref: 6001990

Hilbre, 17 Watling Street South, Church Stretton, Shropshire SY6 7BG

- 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. Roger Hill against the decision of Shropshire Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/02077/FUL.
 - The development is proposed erection of a new dormer bungalow.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. Whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Church Stretton Conservation Area (the CA).

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises the side garden of the host property, Hilbre, a large, detached house that occupies a generous plot on the corner of Watling Street South and Hazler Crescent. The site is located within a quiet residential area, within the CA.
4. The CA encompasses an expansive area, within Church Stretton, including the historic core of the town and residential areas that extend up the valley sides. The significance and special interest of this part of the CA, in my view, is primarily derived from the well-preserved, large buildings and houses, which largely have an Edwardian character, set within spacious plots. The houses are also largely set behind garden hedges and / or attractive brick walls, with a preponderance of mature trees within gardens which ensure that the area has a verdant character which further contributes positively towards the significance of the CA.
5. The generous plot size and its verdant appearance, with lawned garden, tall frontage hedges and mature trees, makes an important contribution to the CA's significance. Indeed, the side garden forms a generous gap between the appeal property and neighbouring properties along Hazler Crescent, which helps to preserve the spacious appearance of the street scene.
6. With an extensive width, built up to each side boundary, and its large footprint, shallow rear garden and large driveway to the front, the proposed development would harmfully erode the spacious and verdant appearance of the existing plot. Furthermore, the proposed dwelling, with its large width, and part two storey, part single storey height, projecting gable features and the steep roof pitch of the main

building, would have a dominant appearance. In combination, and with the minimal separation distances to either side, the proposal would have a cramped appearance within the plot, which would be unacceptably harmful in the context of the CA.

7. The proposed dwelling would benefit from some natural screening from boundary trees and hedges, and the design includes architectural features which are characteristic of the area. Similarly, sympathetic facing materials could be proposed. Nevertheless, these factors would diminish but not extinguish the extent of harm to the CA.
8. Overall, I conclude that there would be moderate harm to the significance of the CA. Accordingly, the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA, contrary to the expectations of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act). It would therefore have a harmful effect on the area's character and appearance and conflict with Policies CS6 and CS17 of the Shropshire Local Development Framework: Adopted Core Strategy, 2011 and Policies MD2 and MD13 of the Shropshire Council Site Allocations and Management of Development Plan, December 2015, which together and amongst other things, require high quality design and development which avoids harm to the significance of designated heritage assets.

Other Matters

9. My attention has been drawn to a previous planning permission on the appeal site for a new dwelling and creation of one new vehicular access point, Council reference 23/02414/FUL (the previous permission). A copy of the Council's decision notice and the plans for the previous permission have been submitted.
10. The previous permission was for a two-storey dwelling with a modest footprint, set off each side boundary and with a generous amount of space to the front and rear. Even though it would be set slightly back within the site compared to the previous permission and it would have a reduced height, the proposed development would be more harmful to the character and appearance of the area than the permitted development. As such, I attach limited weight to the matter.
11. Reference has been made to other planning permissions¹ for new dwellings elsewhere. In particular, a new house at Plot 12A Oakland Park², located within the Church Stretton Conservation Area. However, although I am mindful that the design of that scheme is similar to the appeal scheme before me, it is located in a different part of the CA compared to the proposed development. Inevitably, it is the detail and specific context of any development which determines whether it is acceptable in practice. Having considered the design and layout of the proposed dwelling, for the reasons given, I consider that it would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. Given this, those examples of other planning permissions elsewhere do not add weight in favour of the development. Accordingly, as I am required to do, I have determined the case before me on the site-specific circumstances and on its own merits.
12. Harm to the landscape and scenic beauty of the Shropshire Hills National Landscape, within which the appeal site lies, did not form part of the reason for

¹ Council references: 18/02067/FUL and 15/02740/REM

² Council reference: 16/04731/VAR

refusal. As the site is contained within an established built-up residential area, I have no grounds to disagree with the Council in this regard.

Heritage Planning Balance

13. The moderate harm that would occur to the character and appearance of the CA would not be severe and therefore it would be 'less than substantial' within the meaning of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Indeed, given the variation in scale of houses nearby, and their plot sizes, and that the proposal would affect a small part of the CA, I consider that it would be at the lower end of that spectrum. Nevertheless, still of considerable importance and weight.
14. Paragraph 215 of the Framework requires such harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. However, less than substantial harm should not necessarily be equated with less than substantial planning objection when the statutory test in the Act that seeks to preserve the character and appearance of a conservation area has not been met.
15. The proposal would provide new housing in a sustainable location and although there are limited details of how it would meet a local housing need, it would contribute to boosting the supply of new housing, as referenced in the Framework. It would also make efficient use of underutilised garden land and contribute to the growth of Church Stretton. As a small windfall, infill site, the proposal could be delivered quickly and built using sustainable building materials and construction methods, including energy-efficient windows and insulation. It could also support renewable energy provision. There would also be social and economic benefits to local services during the construction and occupancy phases of the development. For the reasons given, I also attach limited weight to the previous permission.
16. These matters attract modest weight as public benefits. However, notwithstanding that there is support for the proposal from Church Stretton Town Council and a small number of interested parties, the public benefits would not outweigh the harm identified above to the significance of the heritage asset, the conservation of which the Framework indicates that great weight should be given.
17. Thus, I find that the harm that would arise from the proposal would not be outweighed by its public benefits. Accordingly, there would be a conflict with Paragraph 213 of the Framework as harm to designated heritage assets would not have clear and convincing justification and the Framework states that great weight should be given to a designated heritage asset's conservation.

Conclusion

18. Given the above, I conclude that the proposal would harm and thus not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA and its significance. There are no other considerations or public benefits that would outweigh this harm. It would therefore fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act, the Framework and the development plan. Accordingly, for the reasons given, the appeal should be dismissed.

N Bromley

INSPECTOR