



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 March 2026

by **H Smith BSc (Hons) MSc MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 April 2026

Appeal Ref: 6004400

The New Bungalow, A442 from Lodge Farm to Chapel Lane, Quatford, Bridgnorth, Shropshire WV15 6QJ

- 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 and Mrs M. Loveridge against the decision of Shropshire Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/03571/FUL.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing bungalow and erection of a new two-storey replacement dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) and relevant development plan policies;
 - the effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt;
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area; and
 - whether any harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, would be clearly outweighed by other considerations and if so, whether this would amount to the very special circumstances required to justify the proposal.

Reasons

Whether Inappropriate Development

3. Policy CS5 of the Shropshire Local Development Framework: Adopted Core Strategy (2011) (Core Strategy) is of some age but still has some consistency with national Green Belt policy as it states that new development will be strictly controlled in accordance with national planning policies protecting the countryside and Green Belt. However, it does not mention or apply the very special circumstances test as required by the Framework.
4. Policy MD6 of the Shropshire Council Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan (2015) (SAMDev) states that development proposed

in the Green Belt must be able to demonstrate that it does not conflict with the purposes of the Green Belt. The policy permits development on previously developed sites, which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development, providing it would meet certain criteria. While the requirements set out in Policy MD6 broadly reflect some of the exceptions set out in paragraph 154 of the Framework, the overall policy approach is somewhat different and does not mention replacement buildings. It also does not mention or apply the very special circumstances test as required by the Framework.

5. Consequently, I consider Policy CS5 of the Core Strategy and Policy MD6 of the SAMDev not to be wholly consistent with the Framework and as a result I afford greater weight to the Framework in this regard.
6. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy in the Framework is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.
7. Paragraph 153 of the Framework states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
8. The construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate development in the Green Belt. However, an identified exception under sub-paragraph d) of the Framework paragraph 154 is the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces.
9. The appeal site is within the Green Belt and comprises a detached single-storey bungalow in a prominent position above the A442 road. The existing bungalow would be replaced by a substantial two-storey dwelling. The proposal would be taller and wider than the existing dwelling and would have a larger overall floor area. The proposal's height and massing would therefore be markedly greater than the existing bungalow. It would also have a larger footprint than the present property, resulting in a significant increase in site coverage. As such, the proposed dwelling would be materially larger than the one it would replace. Therefore, the exception under sub-paragraph d) of the Framework paragraph 154 would not apply in this case.
10. Consequently, the proposal would represent inappropriate development within the Green Belt. It would therefore fail to accord with the Green Belt protection aims of the Framework. I am required to attach substantial weight to the harm caused by virtue of the proposal's inappropriateness.

Openness of the Green Belt

11. The proposed dwelling would have a greater height and width than the existing bungalow and would thereby enclose a greater amount of space resulting in a reduction in the openness on site. In a direct comparison between the existing and proposed structures the proposed building is bigger, bulkier, higher and wider than the existing bungalow. As a result of the increase in built form, the proposal would significantly reduce the openness of the Green Belt in spatial terms.

12. The proposal would be seen from public vantage points from the A442 road. It would result in an increase in scale and bulk, which would be a notable change from what is there now. This would result in a marked reduction to the openness of the Green Belt in visual terms.
13. Paragraph 142 of the Framework makes it clear that the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. For the reasons above, the proposal would diminish the contribution the appeal site makes to the openness of the Green Belt in spatial and visual terms. Consequently, there would be moderate harm to the openness of the Green Belt, which would be at odds with the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy. As above, I am required to attach substantial weight to this element of Green Belt harm.

Character and appearance

14. The appeal site comprises an existing single-storey detached bungalow in an elevated position above the A442 road. Despite this elevated position, the bungalow appears unassuming within the street scene when viewed from the road. Its traditional roof form, modest scale and balanced proportions allow it to sit comfortably within the semi-rural character and appearance of the locality.
15. In contrast, the proposed two-storey dwelling would have a distinctly contemporary appearance, incorporating several two-storey gable features on the front elevation alongside extensive areas of glazing. Positioned towards the front of the plot, the scale of the dwelling, combined with its complex design, would result in a conspicuous form of development. The high eaves, intricate roof form and substantial footprint would create a more dominant built form, leading to a significant increase in overall massing compared to the existing bungalow.
16. Due to its elevated position and its considerable size and bulk, the proposed dwelling would appear prominent in views outside the appeal site, particularly from the road. As a result, the form and scale of the proposal would cause harm to the pleasant semi-rural character and appearance of the surrounding area.
17. I acknowledge that Tulip Tree House is a large two-storey detached dwelling which has recently undergone significant extension works. However, the appeal dwelling to be demolished sits at a higher ground level than Tulip Tree House and is clearly separated from it. Due to the higher ground levels, the proposed two-storey dwelling would appear more prominent. Furthermore, its contemporary design would have no resemblance to the Georgian-revival style of Tulip Tree House.
18. For the reasons given, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area contrary to Policies CS6 and CS17 of the Core Strategy, and Policies MD2 and MD7a of the SAMDev. It would also fail to accord with the Framework, in particular paragraph 135, where it provides that planning decisions should ensure developments are sympathetic to local character.

Other considerations

19. The proposal would create employment for local builders and trades people, thus in turn contributing to the local economy. There would be social benefits by the provision of a modern family home, which would contribute to the vitality of the rural community and the Council's five-year housing land supply. The proposal would also present opportunities for energy efficiency measures, which could be

secured by condition. Nevertheless, these would be likely to amount to small benefits relating to just a single dwelling and therefore attract limited weight.

20. The proposal would make effective use of land, being for a replacement dwelling. I therefore attach moderate weight.
21. My attention has been drawn to Tulip Tree House, which has recently benefitted from significant extensions. I do not have the full circumstances of this case before me. However, according to the Council, the permission was on a site that was historically larger and more developed than the appeal site, as it had previously been occupied by a petrol filling station, service bay, and a two-storey dwelling. Therefore, it is not directly comparable to the proposal before me. Its relevance is therefore limited for the purposes of my determination of this appeal. As such, I give it little weight.
22. It is explained that the proposed dwelling is intended to be the appellant's home. Whilst acknowledging such intentions, they amount to personal benefits which in the context of the wider planning considerations relating to this appeal, attract only limited weight.
23. I note that the Council has been progressing a new local plan, which has failed examination. The appellant also indicates that the Council will need to undertake a Green Belt review. Nevertheless, the Council retains an adopted development plan. Moreover, Green Belt review is a matter for plan-making rather than development management. Accordingly, I attach little weight to this matter.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

24. The appellant indicates that the Council does not have a five-year housing land supply (5YHLS) and suggests that the most important policies for determining this appeal are out-of-date, as set out in paragraph 11 d) of the Framework. Even so, just because a policy is deemed out-of-date does not mean that any conflict with it should be ignored. It also does not mean that it carries no weight. As set out in paragraph 232 of the Framework, the degree of weight given to any policy deemed to be out-of-date depends on its consistency with the Framework. The greater the consistency, the greater the weight. It is therefore a possibility that a policy deemed out-of-date due to a lack of housing land supply can carry substantial weight, nonetheless.
25. As set out above, Policy CS5 of the Core Strategy and Policy MD6 of the SAMDev predate the Framework and are not wholly consistent with it as they do not mention the 'very special circumstances' which allow inappropriate development in the Green Belt, and they do not make reference to replacement buildings. As a result, I afford the proposal's conflict with these policies moderate weight.
26. Policies CS6 and CS17 of the Core Strategy are, amongst other things, concerned with how the development would affect the character and appearance of the area. Policy CS6 seeks to protect and conserve the natural and built environment by ensuring that development is appropriate in scale, density, pattern and design, taking into account the local context and character, and those features which contribute to local character. Policy CS17 seeks to ensure that development protects and enhances the diversity, high quality and local character of Shropshire's natural and built environment and contributes to local distinctiveness. In the above context, I find these policies to be broadly consistent with the

Framework and as such I afford them full weight. I also afford the conflict I have identified with them substantial weight.

27. Policy MD2 of the SAMDev, amongst other things, seeks to ensure development contributes to and respects local distinctiveness or valued character by responding appropriately to the form and layout of existing development and the way it functions, including building heights and lines, scale, density and plot sizes. Policy MD7a of the SAMDev states that replacement dwellings should not be materially larger and must occupy the same footprint unless it can be demonstrated why this should not be the case. In the above context, I find these policies to be broadly consistent with the Framework and as such I afford them full weight. I also afford the proposal's conflict with these policies substantial weight.
28. The Framework indicates that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 153 of the Framework also sets out that any harm to the Green Belt should be afforded substantial weight. In this context, very special circumstances will not exist unless the harm to the Green Belt and any other harm is clearly outweighed by other considerations. Consequently, other considerations weighing in favour of the development must clearly outweigh any harm.
29. I have found that the proposal would amount to inappropriate development in the Green Belt in conflict with the aims of the Framework. It would also cause harm to the openness of the Green Belt. I afford these harms substantial weight in the planning balance. In addition, harm has also been identified to the character and appearance of the area, to which I also attach substantial weight.
30. Consequently, overall, I conclude that the harm by reason of inappropriateness, the harm to openness and the harm to the character and appearance of the area, are not clearly outweighed by the identified other considerations so as to amount to the very special circumstances required to justify the proposal. For this reason, I also consider there is a strong reason for refusing the proposal meaning that the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the Framework paragraph 11 d) is not engaged.
31. The proposal conflicts with the development plan as a whole, and there are no material considerations worthy of sufficient weight that would indicate a decision other than in accordance with it. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

H Smith

INSPECTOR