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## Appeal Decision

**Site visit made on 18 March 2026**

**by R J Redford MTCP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 April 2026

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### **Appeal Ref: 6001963**

### **Rossall New Cottages, Isle Lane, Bicton, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY3 8DZ**

- 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 Sara Sartain on behalf of the Executors of Pearl Mary Tudor against the decision of Shropshire Council.
  - The application Ref is 25/02913/PIP.
  - The development proposed is for between two and four dwellings on land to the north and south of Rossall New Cottages.
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### **Decision**

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### **Preliminary Matters**

2. Planning Practice Guidance advises that the permission in principle consent is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development. This is a two-stage process and planning permission is only created once both stages have been completed. The first stage, Permission in Principle (PiP), establishes whether a site is suitable in-principle, and the second stage, Technical Details Consent (TDC), is when the detailed development proposals are assessed.
3. For PiP the scope of considerations are limited to location, land use and the amount of development permitted<sup>1</sup>. All other matters are considered as part of the subsequent TDC application if the PiP is granted.
4. The Council has stated that its reference to Shropshire Local Development Framework: Adopted Core Strategy (CS) Policy CS17 and Shropshire Council Site Allocations and Management of Development Plan (SAMDev) Policy MD2 in the Decision Notice are not relevant to the determination of this proposal as a PiP.
5. Both parties have referred to SAMDev Policy S16.2 (vi) and the appellant has referred to SAMDev Policy MD3. Although these have not been submitted, the online version has been reviewed as part of this decision.

### **Main Issues**

6. The main issues are whether the appeal site is a suitable location for the proposed development with regard relevant local policies relating to development in the countryside; and the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the rural area, with regard to location, the proposed land use, and the amount of development.

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<sup>1</sup> set out within PPG: Permission in principle Paragraph: 012 Reference ID: 58-012-20180615 Revision date: 15 06 2018

## Reasons

### *Local policies relating to development in the countryside*

7. CS Policy CS1 sets out the strategic approach for new development including that development in community hubs and clusters would help the rural areas of the district become more sustainable. SAMDev Policy MD1, identifies Bicton and Four Crosses as a community cluster settlement.
8. However, the appeal site is located next to Rossall New Cottage (the Cottages) on Isle Lane. It constitutes 2 rectangular sections of land that bookend the cottages. There is a series of fields which physically separate them from the development boundaries of the settlements of Bicton and Four Crosses. The appeal site is therefore considered a countryside location outside of Bicton and Four Crosses community cluster.
9. Nevertheless, the development plan does provide for housing in the countryside beyond community hubs and cluster settlements, and CS Policies CS5 and CS11 and SAMDev Policy MD7a guide this. However, as the proposal is not accommodation for essential countryside workers, affordable housing to meet a local need, the conversion of existing buildings or would constitute replacement dwellings it would not comply with these policies.
10. The appellant has referred to the appeal site being within the 'zone of influence'<sup>2</sup> of Bicton and Four Crosses. However, there is nothing before me which indicates this as a recognised designation within the development plan which could impact compliance with local policies relating to development in the countryside.
11. Accordingly, the appeal site would not therefore be a suitable location for the proposed development as it would fail to comply with CS Policies CS1, CS5 and CS11, and SAMDev Policies MD1 and MD7A.

### *Character and appearance*

12. The Cottages are 4 semi-detached dwellings. The southern section of the appeal site (SiteA) consists of a section of the field which wraps the Cottages, and the northern section (SiteB) consists some of the same field but also the side garden of the adjacent property, 4 Rossall New Cottages. The properties on the opposite side of Isle Lane stretch beyond SiteA and on the opposite side of SiteB is a further dwelling. Both SiteA and SiteB would be the same depth as the Cottages.
13. The appeal site is therefore part of a residential enclave set within a patchwork of fields, hedges, and small wooded areas. This pattern of pockets of development whose boundaries are defined by landscape features is characteristic throughout the area and informs the general rural appearance.
14. The properties within the residential enclave appear as modest terraced properties or semi-detached pairs located close to the lane with gardens to the side or stretching back from the road. So, within the enclave the road has a reasonable developed appearance.
15. SiteB has dwellings on either side and would not be deeper than the adjacent properties it would not therefore extend the residential enclave further into the

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<sup>2</sup> Paragraph 5.21 of the appellant's Statement of Case

countryside. SiteA would extend development along one side of Isle Lane but the development on the other side of the road stretches for a reasonably long distance beyond it and the existing mature field boundary would create a defined edge to this part of the appeal site thus visually containing the development. Therefore, it is found that the location of SiteA or SiteB would retain the character of the residential enclave they are part of and the overall rural appearance of the wider area.

16. As the appeal site would be adjacent to existing residential dwellings the proposed land use of both SiteA and SiteB would also not be detrimental to the character of the surrounding area.
17. The proposal is for between 2 and 4 dwellings across SiteA and SiteB, and it is recognised that layout, details of design and final quantum would be dealt with through the TDC. Having considered this range in relation to the surrounding dwellings it is conceivable that an appropriately designed scheme of 2 – 4 houses could be built which would be compatible with the surrounding properties and the rural character and appearance of the area.
18. Therefore, with regard to location, the proposed land use, and the amount of development, the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the rural area is unlikely to be harmful. It could therefore comply with CS Policy CS6 insofar as it seeks development to be designed to a high quality which respects local distinctiveness.

### **Other Matters**

19. The appellant has drawn my attention to 2 appeal decisions<sup>3</sup> in relation to accessibility and site locations beyond development boundaries. In both cases it is found the circumstances are sufficiently different to the scheme before me, therefore these examples serve to confirm that on matters relating to location, each case should be considered carefully on its own merits.

### **Planning Balance**

20. The Council cannot demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply, and by taking a precautionary approach due to the most recent Tilstock Road appeal<sup>4</sup>, it considers the current housing land supply to stand at 3.81 years. It is therefore necessary for Paragraph 11 of the Framework to be applied.
21. Therefore, the housing policies that are most important for determining this application, and referred to in the first main issue, are deemed out of date. This would also include the appellant's reference to SAMDev Policy MD3, and the housing allocations for the Bicton and Four Cross community cluster set out in within SAMDev Policy S16.2(vi).
22. The proposal could provide up to 4 dwellings reasonably quickly due to the proposals small scale. The Framework seeks to boost significantly the supply of housing and recognises the importance of small sites in meeting the housing requirement of an area. Along with contributing to the Council's 5-year housing land supply, the associated economic and social benefits and the potential environmental enhancements that could be gained through the TDC process, would attract moderate weighting based on the number of houses involved.

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<sup>3</sup> APP/L3245/W/3358745 and APP/L3245/W/25/3370652

<sup>4</sup> APP/L3245/W/25/3362414

23. The lack of harm found in relation to character and appearance would be neutral in the planning balance.
24. However, when considering the impacts of a proposal Paragraph 11d)ii of the Framework requires assessment against policies in the Framework including those relating to directing development to sustainable locations. Framework Paragraph 110 looks at ensuring development is focused on location which are or can be made sustainable through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. Though it also recognises that these opportunities would vary between urban and rural areas.
25. There are some services and facilities, including bus access, at both Bicton and Four Crosses. The appellant considers as parts of both settlements are within 800m<sup>5</sup> of the appeal site, they would be close enough for future occupants to be able to conveniently walk or cycle to, thus providing genuine transport mode options beyond the use of the car.
26. However, Isle Lane is a narrow unlit road with no pavements or convenient refuges for pedestrians or cyclists. Although visually it looks like a quiet country road, it serves several businesses including an industrial estate, farms, and a care home all of which have regular vehicles moving to and from them. Further it was observed during the site visit some of these are large lorries and agricultural machinery. Therefore, although the distance along Isle Lane to reach Four Crosses may not be extensive walking or cycling along the lane could not be considered overly safe especially in poor weather, at night, or for those with limited mobility.
27. Access to Bicton could be achieved by a largely off-road route via a bridleway and footpaths. However, these are also unlit, having various gates along them, and sections would be across fields which have uneven and potentially muddy. Again, this route would be prohibitive for those with less mobility and the gates would prevent convenient cycle use.
28. It is not therefore considered that the appeal site location would provide genuine alternative modes of transport beyond the private vehicle due to the limitations of the routes to both Four Crosses and Bicton. Finally, that there could be employment opportunities in the vicinity would not negate the reliance on private vehicles for accessing services and facilities necessary for day-to-day-living.
29. As such it is not found that the appeal site could be considered a sustainable location when considering the Framework policies, and this would attract substantial weight. Therefore, the adverse impacts of granting planning permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

## Conclusion

30. For the reasons given above the appeal scheme would conflict with the development plan when read as a whole and there are no sufficiently weighted material considerations, including the Framework, which would indicate a decision otherwise. The appeal is, therefore, dismissed.

*RJ Redford*

INSPECTOR

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<sup>5</sup> A distance the appellants has identified as the walkable distance set in the National Design Guide