



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 June 2026

by A O'Neill BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 July 2026

Appeal Ref: 6006763

37 Harley Road, Cressage SY5 6DF

- 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 Mr Matt Constance against the decision of Shropshire Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/04580/PIP.
 - The development proposed is: permission in principle for the construction of one or two dwellings.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and permission in principle is granted for the construction of one or two dwellings at 37 Harley Road, Cressage SY5 6DF in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 25/04580/PIP.

Preliminary Matters

2. The proposal is for permission in principle (PiP). Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) advises that this is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development. The permission in principle consent route has 2 stages: the first stage (or PiP) establishes whether a site is suitable in principle, and the second, technical details consent (TDC), stage is when the detailed development proposals are assessed. It is the granting of TDC that has the effect of granting planning permission for the development. This appeal relates to the first of these two stages.
3. The scope of the considerations for PiP is limited to location, land use and the amount of development. All other matters are considered as part of a subsequent TDC application if PiP is granted.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is therefore whether the site is suitable for residential development having regard to its location, the proposed land use and the amount of development with particular regard to the Council's strategy for the location of housing and its access to services and facilities.

Reasons

5. The Council's development strategy is set out in the Shropshire Local Development Framework: Adopted Core Strategy 2011 (the CS) and the Shropshire Council Site Allocations and Management of Development 2015 (the SAMDev). Together, CS Policy CS1 and SAMDev Policy MD1 set the strategic approach to the location of development in the district. The policies direct

development to the most accessible locations, including Shrewsbury, Market Towns and Key Centres and in community hubs and clusters in the rural areas.

6. The appeal site is located in Cressage adjacent to existing residential development. Cressage is not one of the settlements identified in the development strategy and it does not have a defined settlement boundary. As such, the site is located in countryside for the purposes of planning policy. Policy CS5 of the CS and Policy MD7a of the SAMDev control new development in the countryside such that only limited types of residential development are permitted. The exceptions listed in Policy MD7a are not applicable to this appeal proposal. The appeal site location would therefore conflict the Council's development strategy insofar as it seeks to control new development in the countryside.
7. Notwithstanding this conflict, Policy CS6 of the CS seeks development which is located in accessible locations where opportunities for walking, cycling and use of public transport can be maximised and the need for car based travel can be reduced. This is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which expects development to promote walking, cycling, and the use of public transport, while recognising that sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas.
8. The main parties agree that Cressage has a range of services and facilities including a convenience store, doctor's surgery and church as well as regular bus services all within reasonable walking distance of the appeal site. Access to these facilities from the site would be along the A458 road, with most of the route benefitting from dedicated footways and streetlighting.
9. There is, however, a short section of road close to the appeal site where no dedicated footway is available. During my site visit, I walked this route and observed that a narrow strip, marked by a white line between the carriageway and the front boundaries of adjacent properties, provides a degree of separation for pedestrians. Whilst not a formal footway, this section is limited in length and lies within a 30mph speed limit. During my visit, there were regular vehicle movements along the A458 but there were frequent gaps in the traffic. Whilst I appreciate my observations were only a snapshot in time, I have no reason to believe that what I saw was not typical of circumstances at this site. Taking these factors together, I do not find that this would result in conflict between pedestrians and vehicles, compromise highway safety, or deter future occupiers from travelling on foot to the extent suggested by the Council.
10. I acknowledge that there are no dedicated cycleways in the vicinity of the site. However, neither Policy CS6 nor the Framework require all forms of sustainable travel to be available. Future occupiers would be able to access a range of local facilities on foot, together with bus services providing connections to other locations. Consequently, there would be realistic alternatives to the private car for some journeys. Whilst opportunities for cycling may be more limited than in more urban locations, this is not uncommon in rural areas, and in the context of the aforementioned policies, does not undermine the accessibility of the site.
11. Given the availability of local facilities and public transport, future occupiers would not, in my view, be reliant on the private car to the extent suggested by the Council. Having regard to the Framework's acknowledgement that opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes will differ between urban and rural areas, I

am satisfied that the site is in a location that accords with the aims of Policy CS6 and the Framework.

12. Taking all of the above into account, I find that the site location would conflict with Policies CS1 and CS5 of the CS and SAMDev Policies MD1 and MD7a insofar as the Council's development strategy seeks to control new development in the countryside. Notwithstanding this conflict, I also find that the site would be in a location which would provide access to services and facilities via sustainable travel solutions. As such, the proposal would not conflict with CS Policy CS6, as set out above.
13. The Council's decision notice also cites SAMDev Policy MD2. This policy seeks sustainable design and construction in development which respects local character and incorporates appropriate drainage, landscaping and open space. However, these are matters which would be considered at the TDC stage. As such, I find no direct conflict with Policy MD2 at this PiP stage.

Other Matters

14. I note the Council's concerns regarding whether the appeal site could accommodate two dwellings in the context of the prevailing density of the area and maintaining satisfactory living conditions for neighbouring occupiers. Reference is also made to the potential impact that built development on the site may have on views of the Wrekin. However, these are matters to be considered at the TDC stage. There is no compelling evidence before me to demonstrate that two dwellings could not be accommodated on the site. Nevertheless, whether two dwellings are excessive relative to the scale of the site and the context of its surroundings would be determined at the TDC stage.
15. I also note the Council's concerns regarding vehicular access to the site. However, as the scope of PiP is limited to principle matters, details such as visibility splays which may be needed to demonstrate highway safety would be matters for a TDC application. There is little before me to demonstrate that a safe and suitable access could not be achieved. If subsequent detailed assessment demonstrates otherwise, that would be a matter capable of resulting in the refusal of TDC rather than a reason to withhold PiP.

Planning Balance

16. The Council has confirmed that it cannot demonstrate an adequate supply of housing land and its latest Five Year Housing Land Supply Statement (March 2026) identifies a supply of 4.61 years. In such circumstances paragraph 11 of the Framework indicates that planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies including those directing development to sustainable locations.
17. The proposed development would conflict with the development plan insofar as it seeks to control new development in the countryside. Notwithstanding this conflict, I have found that future occupiers would have access to services and facilities and public transport within reasonable walking distance of the site, in accordance with CS Policy CS6 and the sustainable transport aims of the Framework. I therefore

attribute limited weight to the proposal's conflict with Policies CS1 and CS5 of the CS and SAMDev Policies MD1 and MD7a.

18. The Framework seeks to significantly boost the supply of housing provision, and two dwellings would make a positive contribution in this regard. Economic benefits would also arise from employment during the construction works, and occupation of the new units through additional expenditure in the area, to which I attach modest favourable weight.
19. Thus, in this case, the adverse impacts of the conflict with the development plan would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole. Therefore, the proposal would benefit from the presumption in favour of sustainable development, set out at paragraph 11 of the Framework. The Framework is a material consideration of significant weight and, in this case, indicates that a decision should be made otherwise than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, having regard to all other relevant material considerations, I conclude that permission in principle should be granted.

Conditions

20. The Council's appeal submissions set out what information is expected at the TDC stage. However, Planning Practice Guidance makes it clear that it is not possible for conditions to be attached to a grant of permission in principle. Therefore, I have not imposed any conditions.

Conclusion

21. For the reasons given above, having had regard to the development plan as a whole and all other material considerations, the appeal should be allowed.

A O'Neill

INSPECTOR