

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 November 2016

by Andrew Owen BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 16 November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/C3240/W/16/3156730

The Aston, Wellington Road, Church Aston, Newport TF10 9EJ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Lucy Hughes against the decision of Telford and Wrekin Council.
 - The application Ref TWC/2015/0991, dated 2 September 2015, was refused by notice dated 23 February 2016.
 - The development proposed is the erection of 2no. semi-detached dwellings.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are whether the future occupants of the proposed development would have acceptable access to shops and facilities, and whether the development would provide adequate drainage.

Reasons

3. The site is to the rear of The Aston public house. Access is via a short private road which is also the main access point for a row of four terraced houses. There is also a house on the southern side of the access road. These buildings, plus a few other buildings on Wellington Road alongside The Aston, combine to create a small cluster of development. This cluster is isolated from all other development and is detached from Church Aston and Newport to the north. Indeed it is not disputed by the parties that the site is around 350 metres from the southern edge of Church Aston.
 4. Church Aston merges into the southern edge of Newport and provides schools, a village hall and other community facilities which are around 700 metres from the site. However shops are generally found in Newport town centre which is around 2 kilometres from the site. Wellington Road is a major road into Newport and links the site with Church Aston and Newport. In proximity of the site it is lit and has a pavement along its length as it rises towards the built up areas. There is also a bus stop in close proximity to the site which is used by buses travelling into Newport.
 5. Though the distance to Church Aston is not great enough to be inaccessible by foot or cycle, I consider the speed of traffic along Wellington Road and the hill
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up which pedestrian or cyclists would need to travel, makes these transport options unattractive. Even accounting for the bus service, I consider it is far more likely that occupiers of the development would use their cars to access the facilities in Church Aston. Furthermore as most retail opportunities, and a greater range of community facilities, are within Newport town centre which is further from the site, I consider that even for day to day needs, it is likely that future residents of the development would rely heavily on their cars.

6. As such I consider the occupants of the development would not have acceptable access to shops and facilities and therefore the site is not sustainably located. The development would have a neutral effect in terms of the environmental and economic aspects to sustainability, but this does not outweigh the fact that it would not be sustainably located and so therefore does not constitute sustainable development.
7. I have considered the appeal decisions¹ provided by the appellant relating to sites near Cannock. Whilst both sites appear to be a similar distance from the edge of Cannock as this site is from the edge of Church Aston, both decisions refer to the route between those sites and Cannock being a lightly trafficked rural lane suitable for walking and cycling to shops on Bideford Way. This is not comparable to the site before me as I consider the pedestrian and cycling route to be uninviting for the reasons given above, and because local shops are primarily to be found in Newport town centre which is a significantly greater distance further on from the edge of Church Aston.
8. In conclusion, the development would conflict with Policies CS7 and CS9 of the Telford & Wrekin Core Strategy (TWCS), saved Policy H9 of the Wrekin Local Plan and Policies SP 3 and HO 10 of the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan (TWLP) which all aim to direct housing to the existing settlements. It would also fail to accord with Policy SP 4 of the TWLP and the guidance in paragraphs 7 and 49 of the National Planning Policy Framework which supports sustainable development.

Site drainage

9. No details were submitted with the application detailing how the site would be drained. I note the letter from a building control inspector confirms there is sufficient space within the site to provide soakaways for each property. Whilst this may be the case, I have no further details supporting this, and in light of the contrary view from the Council, I have no persuasive evidence demonstrating that satisfactory drainage could be provided.
10. I acknowledge this issue was not identified on the Council's previous decision on this site. Nonetheless, from the evidence before me, I cannot be confident that the current proposal could be satisfactorily drained. Therefore it has not been demonstrated that the development would not result in an increase in surface water flooding, and accordingly the proposal fails to accord with Policy CS13 of the TWCS which requires development to avoid increasing the risk of flooding.

¹ APP/C3430/W/15/3135205 & APP/C3430/A/14/2225527

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, and taking account of all other considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Andrew Owen

INSPECTOR