



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 April 2025

by P Brennan BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 May 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/C3240/W/25/3359398

The Priory Nursing Home, Spring Hill, Wellington, Telford TF1 3NA

- 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 S Singh against the decision of Telford and Wrekin Council.
 - The application Ref is TWC/2024/0757.
 - The development proposed is a prefabricated smoking facility outbuilding.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Council's decision notice cites Policy BE6 of the Telford and Wrekin Plan 2011-2031 (TWP). However, the Council's delegated officer report, also finds conflict with Policy BE1 of the TWP. As both policies are within the evidence before me, for the purposes of this appeal, I consider both Policies BE1 and BE6 to be pertinent.
3. The reason for refusal on the decision notice also includes reference to paragraph numbers of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which have subsequently altered following publication of the revised version in February 2025. I have referred to the updated paragraph numbers in this decision.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the non-designated heritage asset (NDHA).

Reasons

5. The appeal site comprises 'The Priory Nursing Home' and its curtilage and is recorded as an NDHA in the Historic Environment Record. Paragraph 216 of the Framework advises that 'in weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.'
6. The NDHA relates to an early 19th century, two storey stuccoed house with a low-pitched slate roof, overhanging eaves and a central porch with pilasters and entablature. This former mansion house retains its elegance and grandiosity through its Georgian-styled central porch, its position set back from the main road, its sweeping front driveway and front garden. A brick wall of varying height forms the boundary treatment with Spring Hill and complements its setting. Its

significance appears to derive from its architectural interest and its largely intact setting.

7. The original building has been extended to either side with accommodation relating to its use as a nursing home. The original building's setting has therefore changed over time through extensions, the provision of car parking and the removal of trees to the front. However, the large driveway and front lawn have remained relatively unchanged and positively enhance the setting of the NDHA. The 19th century building, and its front lawn remain prominent and important features on site.
8. The site is located on Spring Hill and has a varying topography. The site levels rise from the site boundary with the footpath both from the front to the rear and from its boundary with 94 North Road to its junction with Admaston Road. The outbuilding would sit on the front lawn, adjacent to an existing residents' garden seating area, and opposite the main entrance to the nursing home. It would be highly prominent due to the site topography and its position on the front lawn at the top of the sweeping driveway. It would be particularly visible when approaching along Spring Hill from its junction with North Road and beyond.
9. The proposed development would be situated in an unsuitable location as the newly planted trees would only provide minimal screening. Also, the existing boundary wall would provide only partial screening from public views, due to its varying height. The outbuilding would fail to respect the appeal site context and landscape setting. No other built form is situated within the front lawned area that might screen the outbuilding and offset its prominence within the NDHA's setting.
10. The proposed prefabricated, hemispherical outbuilding would be contemporary in design, comprising of a timber frame, infilled with metal panelling and glazing. The proposed development would bear no correlating design elements or materials that would respond to or respect the key vernacular features of the original building. As such, it would be a jarringly, incongruous feature, that would not respond positively to its context.
11. In applying a balanced judgement, I understand the functional need to provide a safe and compliant smoking outbuilding for staff and residents that addresses safety concerns including accessibility and proximity to the building. However, these are personal circumstances that do not outweigh the moderate harm, based on its siting and design, to the setting of the NDHA. This would erode its significance which would diminish this irreplaceable resource.
12. Consequently, for the above reasons, the proposed development would have a detrimental effect on the building's setting and would therefore demonstrably harm the significance of the NDHA. Accordingly, I find conflict with Policy BE1 and Policy BE6 of the TWP. These policies seek development that responds positively to its context; respects the landscape setting and topography; preserves, and reinforces historic layouts, frontages, and boundary treatments; maintains important landmarks; and would not have a detrimental impact on the character and setting of a building of local interest.
13. The proposal would also be contrary to Paragraphs 208, 210 and 216 of the Framework. These seek development that considers its impact on heritage assets and makes a positive contribution to heritage asset conservation and local character and distinctiveness.

Other Matters

14. While Wellington Town Council supported the proposed outbuilding, this is not a reason in itself to allow development which I have found to have moderate harm on the setting of the NDHA.
15. The appellant has brought to my attention the Council's approval of similar developments within the vicinity alongside a previously refused planning application¹ on the appeal site. However, no further details have been provided. As such, I am unable to consider their consequence in my consideration of this appeal. Furthermore, I note that the proposed outbuilding could be removed at any time following installation. However, as this is a proposal for a permanent outbuilding this assertion carries only limited weight in favour of the development.
16. The appellant refers to the possibility of reorientating the outbuilding by ninety degrees to reduce its impact. However, an amended scheme has not been submitted as part of the appeal evidence. In any event, an appeal is not an appropriate route in which to attempt to evolve a proposal. As such, this decision is based on the proposed development before me.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the proposal would conflict with the development plan and there are no material considerations that indicate that the development should be determined otherwise than in accordance with it. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

P Brennan

INSPECTOR

¹ TWC/2024/0072