



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 June 2025

by N Bromley BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 July 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/P1805/W/25/3363404

21 Meadow Road, Catshill, Bromsgrove B61 0JJ

- 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 The Town Planning Practice against the decision of Bromsgrove District Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00073/PIP.
 - The development proposed is permission in principle for a residential dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

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

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the site is suitable for residential development in terms of its effect on character and appearance, having regard to its location, the proposed land use, and the amount of development.

Reasons

5. The appeal site comprises the large rear garden of 21 Meadow Road, a two-storey detached house, within the settlement of Catshill. The surrounding area primarily has a residential character and many of the buildings range in age, style, scale, and appearance, set within varying plot sizes. Non-residential buildings nearby integrate into the residential character and appearance of the area.
6. The appeal property fronts the road and has a long rear garden, as do the other buildings which extend along the road. Similarly, the residential properties beyond the rear boundary of the appeal site, on Brookside Drive, also front the road and have rear gardens. This creates a linear built form in this part of the settlement,

and land at the rear of the buildings is largely free from built development. This is the main characteristic of the pattern of development in the locality.

7. Given the backland location of the proposed dwelling, it would interrupt the established pattern of development in the immediate surroundings. Indeed, the introduction of a single dwelling at the rear of the properties would appear as a stark anomaly within the context of the established built form of the locality.
8. Furthermore, a single dwelling, within a large plot would be visible from the road, between the existing buildings and a new vehicle access that would be created to the side of the host property. As a result, a single building at the rear of existing properties would be a conspicuous development in this location, which would contribute to the adverse effect of the proposal within this part of the settlement.
9. Copies of two appeal decisions¹ have been submitted by the appellant. Those two schemes were also for backland development. Inevitably it is the detail and specific context of any development which determines whether it is acceptable in practice. The plans for each scheme have been submitted and even though those schemes are located to the rear of existing buildings, the site-specific characteristics, including the disposition of buildings, in those appeals is different to the scheme before me. Given this, these examples, as well as other development of garden land within the wider Bromsgrove area referred to by the appellant do not add weight in favour of the development. Accordingly, as I am required to do, I have determined the case before me on its own merits.
10. I acknowledge that due to the size of the garden, the appellant could erect outbuildings of a substantial size under permitted development rights. Nonetheless, domestic outbuildings are not uncharacteristic features within rear gardens. In addition, a detached outbuilding would be viewed in the context of the existing rear garden of the property. In contrast, the proposal would sub-divide the plot, have a separate vehicle access and private garden. As such, it would be viewed as an independent house, and I am not persuaded that the proposal would be comparable to a domestic outbuilding.
11. In the context of the above considerations, I conclude that the appeal site would not be an appropriate location for the development proposed, due to the resultant harm to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would therefore conflict with Policies BDP7 and BDP19 of the Bromsgrove District Plan, and Policies H3 and H4 of the Catshill and North Marlbrook Neighbourhood Plan, which together and amongst other things, require development to be in keeping with the character and quality of the local environment, maintain local distinctiveness and enhance the established pattern of streets.

Planning Balance

12. The Council accept that they cannot demonstrate a five year supply of housing land. Indeed, the latest information before me suggests that the current shortfall is 1.98 years. In my opinion this is a severe shortfall. Therefore, the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out at Paragraph 11(d) of the Framework applies. In these circumstances, Paragraph 11(d)(ii) of the Framework states that planning permission should be granted unless any adverse effects of

¹ Appeal references: APP/P1805/A/14/2226199 & APP/P1805/W/18/3197878

doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

13. An additional smaller house, on garden land in an area with good access to services, amenities and public transport opportunities, would contribute to boosting the supply of new housing, as referenced in the Framework. It would also make efficient and effective use of underutilised land, and a new house could be designed to meet an identified local housing need. As a small site it could also be delivered relatively quickly and add to the mix of housing in the area. There would also be social and economic benefits to local services during the construction and occupancy phases without conflict with neighbouring land uses. In combination, and in the context of the shortfall in housing land, the benefits attract considerable positive weight in my determination. However, due to the small scale nature of the proposed development the benefits of the scheme would attract moderate weight overall.
14. In contrast, the erection of an additional dwelling on the plot, having regard to its location would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area, in conflict with the identified policies of the development plan. These policies are consistent with the Framework which seek the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places and requires development to be sympathetic to local character. I attach significant weight to the level of harm and the conflict with the policies of the development plan.
15. Consequently, the adverse impacts of the proposal would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole. Accordingly, the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons set out above, the appeal site is not suitable in principle for residential development. The proposal, as a permission in principle, conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

N Bromley

INSPECTOR