



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 July 2025

by Jonathan Price BA(Hons) DipTP DMS MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 July 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/K2610/D/25/3365697

7 Edwin Close, Stratton Strawless, Norwich NR10 5RY

- 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 Portass against the decision of Broadland District Council.
 - The application Ref is 2025/0286.
 - The development proposed is described as 'new vehicle access & wall (retrospective) following refusal of 2024/2335'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Background and Main Issue

2. The proposal seeks planning permission for an individual vehicular access made directly onto the C245 Shortthorn Road from the detached house at No 7. This is located at the end of Edwin Close; a cul-de-sac serving six other dwellings and which provides access onto the public highway via Edwin Way. The gated access and adjoining brick wall applied for are in place, hence the proposal being retrospective. This had followed an earlier planning application for this access which had been refused¹ in 2024 on highway safety grounds, due to inadequate visibility onto Shortthorn Road. Since this previous decision, the owner of the next-door dwelling at Four Oaks has removed trees and bushes from along the roadside verge, improving highway visibility to the east. However, on advice from the local highway authority (LHA), the Council refused planning permission for this current proposal for similar reasons as before. Therefore, the main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on highway safety.

Reasons

3. Paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) advises that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe. This proposal might reasonably be considered not to have significant impacts on the transport network, in terms of capacity and congestion, and so the consideration is whether or not there is an unacceptable impact on highway safety.
4. The C245 Shortthorn Road is subject to a 40mph speed limit, where the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) would require visibility splays of 2.4 metres

¹ Ref 2024/2335

- by 120 metres in both directions at this access. The plans indicate visibility splays of approximately 2.4 metres by 65 metres, significantly less than DMRB standards.
5. The LHA estimates the visibility splay at the access to the west as 18 metres, from a 2.4 metre set back, which achieves only about 21% of the DMRB requirement. Visibility to the east was found to be around 65 metres, although much of this relies on third party owner's verge maintenance, which the appellant has no control over. The LHA estimates that visibility from the site access within land the appellant controls and is available highway amounts to only 3 metres, which is just 2.5% of the required DMRB standard. Even with third party cooperation, the LHA advises that the access only achieves some 54% of visibility required by DMRB standard (nearly two steps below the desirable minimum).
 6. The LHA informs me that its latest data shows 85th percentile speeds on Shorthorn Road in excess of the posted 40 mph limit. Whilst the DMRB standards are a starting point for assessing individual proposals, this speed data provides no compelling case for supporting any relaxation of these.
 7. Whilst this direct entrance might be convenient for the occupier of the dwelling, serving the double garaging and turning space fronting the road, its approved access is to the other side onto Edwin Close. This can be accessed from around the house and serves a recently allowed cart lodge building² at the rear. Therefore, there is little support for allowing this second access, particularly as it falls significantly short of highway safety standards. On account of the access failing to provide adequate visibility at its junction onto Shorthorn Road, this proposal would have a significant adverse effect on highway safety. This is contrary to Policy TS3 of the Broadland Development Management Development Plan Document 2015 and the Framework.

Balance and Conclusion

8. The long-established nature of the access does not alter my view that the interests of highway safety would be better served through there not being a direct vehicular access here onto Shorthorn Road, given the existing and safer access approved via Edwin Close. This proposal gains no support from the existence of other sub-standard accesses from properties onto Shorthorn Road, over which there is no control. Allowing this additional access would serve only to exacerbate the highway safety disadvantages of such a situation.
9. The provision of on-site turning space, allowing forward-gear entry and exit, creates a safer situation than if vehicles needed to make a reversing movement either into or out of the site. Although the provisions of such on-site turning space makes the use of the direct access onto Shorthorn Road safer, it fails to overcome the concerns over sub-standard visibility.
10. The refusal reason was not in respect of the appearance of the existing wall and gate, which meet the design requirements of BLP Policy GC4. However, satisfaction of unrelated design matters provides no reasonable case in favour of adverse highway safety considerations.
11. The appellant provides a map derived from Crashmap.co.uk and notes two incidents along Shorthorn Road within 25 metres of the appeal property. This

² Ref 20210091

evidence is far from supportive of the use of this access being suitable from a highway safety perspective.

12. This proposal has a significant adverse effect on highway safety. Material considerations are not advanced which indicate this appeal be determined otherwise than in accordance with the development plan, with which there would be conflict when considered as a whole. Therefore, I conclude the appeal be dismissed

Jonathan Price

INSPECTOR