
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 July 2025

by Bhupinder Thandi BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/C3240/W/25/3367057

Land north and west of Stretton View, Buildwas Road, Ironbridge, Telford TF8 7BN

- 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 Telford Four Ltd against the decision of Telford and Wrekin Council.
 - The application Ref is TWC/2024/0767.
 - The development proposed is change of use of land for the siting of up to 30no. holiday lodges.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appeal site lies within two local authority boundaries. The majority of the site lies within Telford and Wrekin Council's administrative area, however, a section of the access road is within Shropshire Council's administrative area.
3. The Planning Practice Guidance states that where a site which is the subject of planning application straddles one or more local planning authority boundaries, the applicant must submit identical applications to each authority.
4. No such cross-boundary planning application has been submitted to Shropshire Council. Telford and Wrekin Council does not have the ability to determine any part of the scheme under the jurisdiction of Shropshire Council, nor do I. Thus, my determination of this appeal is against the decision made by Telford and Wrekin Council on the application listed in the banner heading above.
5. Following determination of the application the appellant has produced a Flood Risk Assessment. I have paid regard to this document in consideration of the appeal, and I note that the Council has commented on its contents. Having regard to the Holborn Studios judgement¹ which follows on from Wheatcroft² I am satisfied that no interested parties have been prejudiced by my approach.
6. I have been made aware of the planning history of the site which includes planning permission, granted by the Council, for the change of use of the site for the siting of 12 holiday lodges. Whilst this is a consideration I must give weight to in coming to my decision I have assessed the proposed development on its own individual merits.

¹ Holborn Studios Ltd v The Council of the London Borough of Hackney [2017] EWHC 2823 (Admin)

² Bernard Wheatcroft Ltd v Secretary of State for the Environment [JPL, 1982, P37]

7. I have shortened the description of development in the banner heading above and omitted the reference to the Acts as they do not constitute development.

Main Issues

8. The main issues are:

- The effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the area;
- The effect of the proposed development upon the safe and efficient operation of the local highway network;
- The effect of the proposed development upon the living conditions of nearby occupiers in respect of privacy and noise; and
- Flood risk

Reasons

Character and appearance

9. The appeal site is formed of a broadly L shaped parcel of land located on the northern escarpment of a valley. The site forms part of a grassed clearing surrounded on three sides by dense woodland and which gradually rises to the north and offers views across the valley. Despite the presence of informal tracks along its eastern and southern edge the site's undeveloped and green nature positively contributes to the surrounding landscape.
10. I acknowledge that details relating to materials, finishes, spacing, public realm and roads are not before me and some details could be secured through the imposition of conditions. However, it is evident that a development of up to 30 holiday lodges would be a prominent feature in views across the valley and clearly distinguishable to users of the public footpath in localised views. The proposed development would result in an uncharacteristic concentration of buildings prominently positioned on the valley side drawing the eye. They would be intrusive features within the landscape and would have a detrimental impact on the rural and open character of the site.
11. The inevitable presence of domestic vehicles and paraphernalia would spread development across the landscape resulting in an urbanising effect which would be significantly at odds with the prevailing rural landscape character and eroding its verdant appearance.
12. Whilst I note that the proposed development has evolved on the foundation of the Council's licensing guidance for caravans this is a matter that falls under different legislation and is not a substitute for a good layout or justification for a scheme that I have found to be harmful.
13. I conclude that the development as proposed would adversely affect the character and appearance of the area contrary to Policies SP4, EC12 and BE1 of the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan (2018) (LP) which, amongst other things, require new development to respect and respond to its context and enhance the quality of the local natural environment.

Safe and efficient operation of the local highway network

14. The site is accessed via a road leading off Buildwas Road that runs parallel to the River Severn at the bottom of the valley. The road, which is also a public footpath, rises up the slope and serves a handful of residential properties and commercial enterprises. Along its entire length it varies, but it is uneven, narrow in places, with high sided wooded banks and walls restricting its width.
15. The appellant's Transport Note predicts that the proposed development would generate 32 two-way movements over a 15-hour weekday period. Thus, it would result in more intensive vehicular activity along much of its length on account of visitors to the site.
16. The narrow width of the road together with more intensive vehicle movements are likely to lead to conflict between vehicles travelling along it. This increase in the potential for collisions with oncoming vehicles would result in an unacceptable impact upon highway safety.
17. It would also be an uninviting and unsafe environment for pedestrians using the public footpath. The road's narrow width with limited opportunity for refuge from vehicles would result in an environment that would not be conducive for users of the public footpath and who would be unduly inconvenienced and endangered by vehicle movements along it.
18. Overall, the vehicular movements associated with the development are likely to result in conflict between vehicles travelling in different directions as well as pedestrian users of the public footpath.
19. In addition, no information has been provided in relation to parking provision and parking management for the holiday lodges to demonstrate that vehicles could satisfactorily manoeuvre within the site. Without such information I cannot be satisfied that the site or parking areas would be accessible or usable which is likely to result in indiscriminate and inconsiderate parking taking place along the access road resulting in a further detriment to highway safety.
20. In coming to my decision, I have paid regard to the traffic flows associated with the extant planning permission and the contents of the Travel Plan, however, this does not alter my conclusions in respect of this main issue. Ownership, maintenance and private access rights over the road are not matters for me in consideration of this appeal.
21. I conclude that the proposed development would adversely affect the safe and efficient operation of the local highway network contrary to LP Policies C3 and C5 which, amongst other things, require all development to mitigate site specific highway issues and take into consideration the needs of pedestrians and to provide safe, convenient and well designed routes.

Living conditions of existing occupiers

22. Located close to the site is a bungalow cut into the valley side. Its amenity space is bound by tracks on two sides without any legible boundary treatment enclosing the plot. As a result views into the property and its amenity space are afforded from the surrounding area.

23. A development of up to 30 holiday lodges is likely to result in separate and independent comings and goings associated with visitor's own holiday activities and daily routines.
24. These comings and goings, the sound of car doors slamming, vehicle engines, conversations, car lights as well as activities associated with holiday accommodation would be noticeable. This would be particularly so during evenings and weekends and the warmer summer months when the holiday lodges are likely to be busier and nearby residents would have windows and doors open or spending time in their gardens.
25. The intermittent and arbitrary nature of the activities would likely result in an unacceptable impact on the living conditions of existing occupiers in terms of noise and disturbance.
26. Furthermore, given the land continues to rise to the north of the bungalow and in the absence of a boundary treatment the positioning of lodges higher up the slope would likely result in a degree of overlooking and loss of privacy for the occupiers of this property unacceptably harming their living conditions.
27. As such, the proposed development would adversely affect the living conditions of existing occupiers with regard to noise and loss of privacy contrary to LP Policy BE1 which, amongst other things, requires proposals to demonstrate there is no significant adverse impact on nearby properties.

Flood risk

28. Paragraph 170 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing it away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future). Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere. For individual applications a sequential risk-based approach should be taken in areas known to be at risk now or in the future from any form of flooding, except in situations where a site-specific flood risk assessment demonstrates that no built development within the site boundary would be located on an area that would be at risk of flooding.
29. I acknowledge that the majority of the site is located within Flood Zone 1, however, part of the road leading to the site falls within Flood Zone 3 which has a high probability of flooding. A more vulnerable holiday accommodation use would be introduced onto the site which could be at risk from flooding and in the absence of a robust assessment, I cannot be certain that no built development within the site, including access or escape routes or other potentially vulnerable elements, would be located on areas that would not be at risk of flooding from any source, now and in the future (having regard to potential changes in flood risk).
30. On this basis, I cannot conclude that the proposed development avoids flood risk and as such, based on the available information the proposed development would conflict with LP Policy ER12 which, amongst other things, requires development to reduce instances of flooding.

Other Matters

31. I acknowledge that the proposed development would support inward economic investment and would be close to established visitor attractions. However, these factors would not outweigh the harm that I have identified above.

Conclusion

32. For the reasons set out above the appeal does not succeed.

B Thandi

INSPECTOR