



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 December 2025

by Timothy Parton BA(Hons) MPLAN MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 January 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/J1860/W/25/3369169

Greenacres, The Rampings, Longdon, Worcestershire GL20 6AL

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Michael Ferguson against the decision of Malvern Hills District Council.
 - The application Ref is M/24/01245/OUT.
 - The development proposed is for the split of land and erection of new 3-bed detached dwelling and replacement of existing outbuildings.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Layout and elevation plans of the proposed new dwelling have been provided as part of the application, these are treated as illustrative only. The only matters being considered for this appeal are the principle for the development of a new dwelling on the site and proposed access arrangements, all other matters are reserved.

Main Issue(s)

3. The main issues are whether the appeal site would be an appropriate location for the proposed development, having regard to the accessibility to services and facilities, and whether the proposal makes adequate provision for affordable housing, having regard to relevant local policies.

Reasons

Location and accessibility

4. The site is located within a rural area predominantly surrounded by open countryside. The site is adjacent to an existing dwelling (Greenacres), with field access and a public right of way adjacent to the northern boundary, and The Rampings, a mainly single-track road, running along the eastern site boundary. The Rampings has a sporadic existing development pattern, with dwellings irregularly positioned along both sides of the road, and separated by spacious gardens, agricultural fields, and dense vegetation. The area has a strong rural character, with extensive views of the open countryside provided between the existing dwellings. The site is located around 4 miles from Tewkesbury, the nearest town.
5. Policy SWDP2 of the South Worcestershire Development Plan (2016) (the Plan) sets out the Council's development strategy, which promotes sustainable patterns of development by focusing most development on Worcester and other urban

areas and presenting a settlement hierarchy where some growth will be directed. The site is not within a development boundary.

6. Land beyond any development boundary is defined by Part C of Policy SWDP2 as open countryside, where development will be strictly controlled and limited to rural workers' dwellings, employment development, rural exception sites, buildings for agriculture and forestry, replacement dwellings, renewable energy projects and development specifically permitted by other Plan policies.
7. The planning application did not present the proposal as a development constituting any of these exceptions. I note through this appeal the appellant has suggested that the proposed dwelling could be used as a rural workers' dwelling, however I have not been provided with any evidence that there is an essential need for a rural worker to live at this location. On this basis I am not considering the proposed dwelling as accommodation for a rural worker.
8. While the Plan notes that restrictions to development in rural areas seek to maintain the quality of the open countryside as an important planning attribute of the area, limitations for development in rural areas presented in Policy SWDP2 of the Plan also seek to direct development to locations where there are opportunities for future occupants to use sustainable modes of transport. In determining the suitability of the location of the site for development, consideration should therefore be given to how potential future occupants of the development would access services and facilities.
9. There are no pavements, cycle paths, or streetlights on The Rampings, which is the main access route to surrounding areas. There are no services and facilities in close proximity to the site, and no nearby public transport services. Any future occupants of the proposed development would therefore be reliant on the use of a private motor vehicle to access services and facilities.
10. Consequently the appeal site would not be an appropriate location for the proposed development, having regard to the accessibility to services and facilities. This is contrary to Policy SWDP2 of the Plan, which seeks, amongst other things, to direct new development to appropriate locations.
11. There is also conflict with Policy SWDP4 of the Plan, which seeks, amongst other things, that development proposals must demonstrate that they will minimise demand for travel and offer genuinely sustainable travel choices. The Council referred to Policy SWDP1 of the Plan within the reason for refusal relating to the location of the proposed development. This policy sets out the Council's approach to decision making, reflecting the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). This is addressed below.
12. The proposed development would not constitute sustainable development, which conflicts with the Framework.

Affordable housing provision

13. Part B of Policy SWDP15 of the Plan requires sites of less than 5 dwellings to provide a financial contribution towards local affordable housing provision. No evidence of a mechanism to secure the necessary financial contribution towards affordable housing has been submitted.

14. The appellant's Statement of Case states that the proposed dwelling could be an affordable dwelling. While the direct provision of an affordable dwelling would be beneficial in broadly mitigating conflict with Policy SWDP15 in relation to the provision of affordable housing, no details have been submitted to explain how the proposed dwelling would be secured as an affordable dwelling now and in perpetuity. This information is required through Part D of Policy SWDP15. On this basis I am not considering the proposed development as an affordable dwelling.
15. Accordingly, the proposal fails to make adequate provision for affordable housing. This is contrary to the requirements of Policy SWDP15 of the Plan and the South Worcestershire Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (2016, SPD), which seek, amongst other things, to ensure relevant proposals make provision for affordable housing. In addition, the proposed development would fail to meet the social objectives of sustainable development presented within the Framework.

Other Matters

16. The Council's reasons for refusal includes the failure of the proposal to include a legal mechanism to secure the development as a self-build dwelling. Self-build housing is encouraged by the Framework, however I have not been directed to any policies within the Plan regarding the provision of self-build housing. I have not been informed that the appellant is on the Council's self-build register, and I have not been provided with information regarding the Council's current self-build supply and demand position. In addition, while the Council have considered the proposal as a self-build dwelling, it is unclear from the original application materials that this was the intention of the applicant, and no details were provided within the application to outline how the proposed development would be secured as a self-build dwelling. To appropriately consider the proposal as a self-build dwelling as part of the planning balance, additional information would be required on this matter. However given the main issues presented above, the consideration of the proposed development as a self-build dwelling is not determinative to this appeal decision.
17. Detailed access arrangements are provided as part of the proposal. Given the size and layout of the site, and its positioning adjacent to the Ramblings, I am content that acceptable access arrangements could be secured for the site.
18. I note the appellant's Statement of Case refers to the proposed development as a conversion of an agricultural building. This is not consistent with the description of the development provided for the appeal. On this basis I am not considering the proposal as a conversion of an agricultural building. Reference to Class Q development is similarly not relevant as the proposal has not been submitted on the basis of seeking to use the Class Q permitted development rights.
19. I acknowledge that no objections have been received. The absence of objections does not make a proposal acceptable as representations are only one factor in the determination of planning applications and appeals.
20. Through the appellant's Statement of Case I have been directed to examples of recent developments in the surrounding area. The information provided does not allow me to make any meaningful comparisons, as I am not aware of the specific circumstances relating to these developments. In any event, each scheme must be considered and determined on its individual merits.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

21. A decision on whether to grant permission must be made in accordance with the relevant policies in the development plan, unless there are material considerations, such as those in the Framework, which indicate otherwise.
22. The Council cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites and therefore paragraph 11d) of the Framework is engaged. This means that planning permission should be granted, unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.
23. The proposal would create an additional dwelling that would help reduce the Council's housing deficit and would accord with one of the Framework's aims of boosting housing supply. The proposal would also provide some associated socio-economic benefits that would arise from the construction of the dwelling. However, given that this development is for a single dwelling, these benefits have only moderate weight.
24. The location of the proposed development would undermine the aims of the Framework to promote sustainable development by providing new housing in locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of travel modes. The location of the site distant from services and facilities in surrounding areas, and the limited available sustainable travel options, would require future occupants of the development to be reliant on a private motor vehicle to access services and facilities. This would result in an increase in the need to travel by unsustainable modes of transport.
25. In addition, the failure to provide a contribution towards the provision of affordable housing is not consistent with the social objectives of sustainable development as outlined within the Framework.
26. As such, the adverse impacts which, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole, would significantly and demonstrably outweigh any benefits identified from the proposal.
27. The proposal would be contrary to Policies SWDP2, SWDP4, and SWDP15 of the Plan, resulting in conflict with the development plan as a whole. There are no material considerations, including the Framework, which would indicate the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan.
28. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

Timothy Parton

INSPECTOR