



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 February 2026

by **L Reid BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2nd March 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/J1535/W/25/3376029

The Glen, Bournebridge Lane, Stapleford Abbots, Romford, Essex RM4 1LT

- 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 Levi John Jefford against the decision of Epping Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref is EPF/1203/25.
 - The development proposed is a replacement dwelling.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a replacement dwelling at The Glen, Bournebridge Lane, Stapleford Abbots, Romford, Essex RM4 1LT in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref EPF/1203/25, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on:
 - The housing stock through the loss of a bungalow; and,
 - The living conditions of the occupants of Abbots Wood with regard to outlook.

Reasons

Housing stock

3. The appeal site contains a bungalow that sits considerably above road level and is reached from the road via a relatively long and steep sloping driveway. At my site visit, I saw that the bungalow is in quite a poor condition. It is proposed to replace it with a one-and-a-half-storey house.
4. Policy H1 of the Epping Forest District Local Plan 2011-2033 Part One 2023 (the Local Plan) relates to housing mix and accommodation types. Criterion E. states that the loss of bungalows and specialist accommodation will be resisted. The principal justification given in the supporting text is that the Council considers that bungalows can play an important role because of their ease of adaptation such that they can provide choice for people with accessibility requirements, including the current and future needs of older people.
5. While bungalows can often lend themselves to adaptation, this depends heavily on the characteristics of the individual site. Although internally the bungalow is arranged on a single level, the lengthy and steep access route from the road limits overall accessibility, particularly for older people and those with mobility issues. Accordingly, the loss of the bungalow would not be harmful in accessibility terms,

as the site does not currently provide accommodation capable of meeting the needs of people with limited mobility.

6. Achieving an accessible approach to the bungalow would likely require substantial alterations to the site's steep topography. As a result, the adaptability of the bungalow is significantly constrained by the physical characteristics of the appeal site. The scale and extent of the works that would likely be needed to improve the accessibility negate any potential ease of adaptation typically associated with bungalows. In practice, the appeal site is not capable of being easily adapted to meet the needs of people with accessibility requirements or older people.
7. The proposed house would have a generous ground-floor footprint, comprising a separate lounge, kitchen/diner, study and a WC. Based on the plans, there is no indication that the internal layout could not be adapted to accommodate the needs of occupiers with mobility difficulties if required.
8. The Council's assertion that the loss of the bungalow would further exacerbate the erosion of the existing stock, as per their Monitoring Report, is not supported by any specific evidence or analysis. The appellant has drawn my attention to the Council's Authority Monitoring Report 2023 – 2024, which sets out that there was a net increase in the number of bungalows. The Council has offered no robust evidence to challenge this. I am therefore not persuaded that the loss of the bungalow would be detrimental to the housing stock.
9. For the above reasons, in the particular circumstances of this case and the available supporting evidence, there is no basis to resist the loss of the bungalow. I therefore conclude that the proposal would not cause harm to the housing stock through the loss of the bungalow. Accordingly, the proposal complies with the aims of Policy H1 of the Local Plan, the purpose of which has been set out above.

Living conditions of the occupants of Abbots Wood

10. The Council has not specified which aspects of outlook at Abbots Wood would be affected by the proposal. In the absence of such detail, I have considered all parts of the neighbouring property where any perceived impact on outlook might arise. Although the proposed dwelling would be larger than the existing bungalow, an acceptable degree of separation would remain between the side elevation of the dwelling and the shared boundary. The proposed dwelling would therefore not appear overbearing when viewed from the rear garden of Abbots Wood. As the proposed dwelling would not project beyond the ground-floor rear elevation windows of the property, the outlook from those windows would remain unchanged.
11. While the proposed dwelling would extend forward of the front building line of Abbots Wood, the degree of projection would be such that it would not be perceived from the ground-floor front elevation windows to an extent that would result in a harmful loss of outlook. Given its height and depth, the proposed dwelling would be visible from certain first-floor front and rear windows of Abbots Wood. However, it would not dominate those views or occupy them to an extent that would appear overbearing. Consequently, the change in outlook arising would not be significant.
12. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposal would not cause harm to the living conditions of the occupants of Abbots Wood, with regard to outlook. Accordingly,

the proposal would comply with Policy DM9 of the Local Plan, which amongst other things, expects proposals to not result in an over-bearing or overly enclosed form of development which materially impacts outlook of occupiers of neighbouring properties.

Conditions

13. The Council has supplied a list of suggested conditions. I have considered these in light of the tests in the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). Where appropriate, I have adjusted the wording of the conditions to improve relevance, precision and enforceability.
14. I have imposed the statutory implementation condition [1], along with a condition listing the approved plans to provide certainty [2]. In the interests of the character and appearance of the area, it is necessary to require details of: the external materials [3], site levels pre and post-development [4], hard and soft landscaping [5] and boundary treatment [6]. To ensure risks from land contamination are identified and remediated as necessary, a contamination condition is imposed [7].
15. To promote improved digital connectivity, a condition in relation to the provision of broadband infrastructure is imposed [8]. In the interests of securing appropriate drainage, it is necessary to impose a condition relating to foul and surface water disposal [9]. For sustainability reasons, conditions ensuring water efficiency [10] and for bicycle storage to be provided are imposed [11].
16. In order to minimise disturbance to local residents, it is necessary to restrict the hours and days that deliveries and construction can take place [12]. In the interests of parking and highway safety, it is necessary to restrict the use of unbound materials [13] and to require the parking and turning areas to be provided [14]. It is not necessary to impose a condition relating to electric car charging as this is covered by building regulations.
17. The Council has provided no justification for the imposition of a condition removing various permitted development rights. As set out in the PPG and the Framework, planning conditions should not be used to restrict national permitted development rights unless there is clear justification to do so. The limitations and conditions of permitted development restrict the area of ground covered, the size and position of development allowed and provide some restrictions to protect neighbour amenity. Given the size of the plot, conditions removing permitted development rights would be unjustified and would therefore not be necessary or reasonable.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons given above the appeal should be allowed.

L Reid

INSPECTOR

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with drawing nos:

01 REV C - LOCATION PLAN & PROPOSED SITE PLAN

08 REV C - BLOCK PLAN

05 REV C - PROPOSED ELEVATIONS

04 REV C - PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR & FIRST FLOOR PLANS

06 REV C - PROPOSED STREET SCENE
- 3) No development above ground level shall commence until documentary and photographic details of the type and colours of the external finishes of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 4) No development above ground level shall commence until the details of levels have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority showing cross-sections and elevations of the levels of the site prior to development and the proposed levels of all ground floor slabs of buildings, roadways and accessways and landscaped areas. The development shall be carried out in accordance with those approved details.
- 5) No development above ground level shall commence until full details of hard and soft landscaping have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The hard landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme and shall be completed prior to first occupation of the development. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised within the scheme shall be carried out in the first planting season following completion of the development and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 6) The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until a plan indicating the position, design, materials, and type of boundary treatment is submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be implemented prior to first occupation of the development and thereafter retained.
- 7) Should any discoloured or odorous soils be encountered during development works or should any hazardous materials or significant quantities of non-soil forming materials be found, then all development works should be stopped and an assessment of the risks posed by any contamination, carried out in accordance with British Standard BS 10175: Investigation of potentially contaminated sites - Code of Practice and the Environment Agency's Model

Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination (CLR 11) (or equivalent British Standard and Model Procedures if replaced) shall be undertaken. If any contamination is found then the site shall be remediated. The remediation scheme shall be sufficiently detailed and thorough to ensure that upon completion the site will not qualify as contaminated land under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 in relation to its intended use.

- 8) Prior to first occupation of the development, the dwelling shall be provided with the necessary infrastructure to enable a connection to a superfast broadband network or alternative equivalent service.
- 9) No development above ground level shall commence until details of foul and surface water disposal have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and shall be provided on site prior to the first occupation of the development and shall thereafter be retained.
- 10) Prior to first occupation of the development, measures shall be incorporated within the development to ensure a water efficiency standard of 110 litres (or less) per person per day.
- 11) The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until details of cycle parking have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be installed prior to the first occupation of the development.
- 12) No deliveries, external running of plant, demolition or construction works shall take place on the site other than between the hours of 08:00 to 18:00 on Mondays to Fridays and 08:00 to 13:00 on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays, Public or Bank Holidays.
- 13) No unbound material shall be used in the vehicular access within 6 metres of the highway boundary.
- 14) Prior to first occupation of the development, parking and turning areas shall be provided and thereafter retained.