

an access corridor to the A438 alongside the existing bungalow, which would require the demolition of a car port.

Character and Appearance

5. The settlement of Lugwardine does not appear to have a specific development pattern or character. Properties along the A438 around the appeal site are typical of a residential area, and are set at a variety of angles to the road. Behind the appeal site, Hagley Cottage is accessed from a long drive between other properties in a similar manner to that proposed. The intended plot size would be smaller than those around it. Within the village however, plots have a variety of sizes and include some of a similar size to that proposed.
6. The appeal site would not be readily visible from the A438, and the size of plot would not be apparent from any public viewpoints. I have no reason to believe that a driveway along the access corridor would suggest an overly cramped development, and indeed there is a shared entrance to two dwellings on the opposite side of the A438. Although I acknowledge that the proposal would represent backland development, in my opinion it would not be unacceptable in relation to the character and appearance of the area, and it would therefore not conflict with Local Plan Policy SH.8. Furthermore, the appeal site is adjoined by single storey dwellings and the Council has suggested a restriction to single storey development which would limit any impact on the roofscape in this part of the village. I have also taken into account Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing, which seeks to encourage the provision of new housing on previously developed land.
7. I therefore conclude that the proposal would not have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, and that it would thus not conflict with Structure Plan Policy CTC.9 or Local Plan Policies SH.6, SH.8 and GD.1.

Highway Safety

8. The site would be accessed from the A438 which has a 40mph speed restriction and appeared to me to be a busy road. Visibility at the proposed access towards Hereford would be constrained by the presence of a hedge in a neighbouring property. When assessed in accordance with the Government publication, Places Streets and Movement, I found that the achievable visibility would be some 31m compared to an advisory distance of 120m. I consider that this visibility would be inadequate and would conflict with the requirement of Local Plan Policy GD.1 to provide a safe access, even taking into account that traffic would be approaching on the opposite side of the carriageway. Furthermore, the access would be at an acute angle to the carriageway in the direction of Hereford, and this would be awkward in terms of visibility.
9. The land towards Ledbury bounding the A438 is within the appellant's control. To move the access towards Ledbury would improve the visibility towards Hereford. I have not been provided with any access details, but in any event such a change in my opinion would result in an unusual arrangement in front of La Marana, which would lead to a cramped appearance and harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of La Marana in relation to noise, disturbance and loss of privacy. I do not therefore consider that my concerns in relation to highway safety could be addressed at reserved matters stage.

HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL PLANNING SERVICES DEVELOPMENT CONTROL
19 MAY 2005
Ack'd

