

Name of Applicant Type of Certificate	Proposal	Map/Plan Policy	Plan Ref. Expiry Date
<b>Mr. A. Adams</b> <b>'A'</b>	One detached dwelling (Outline) - Land adjoining 19 Summerfield Road, Holy Cross, Clent, DY9 9RG	GB CA VENV	<b>11/0502-SC</b> 05.08.2011

**RECOMMENDATION:** that permission be **REFUSED**.

### Consultations

WH	Consulted 21.06.2011 - verbal comments received 01.08.2011: No objection s.t.c.
Clent Parish Council	Consulted 21.06.2011 - no comments received as yet.
Policy	Consulted 21.06.2011 - policy advice received 23.06.2011.
Trees	Consulted 21.06.2011 - no comments received as yet.
Eng	Consulted 21.06.2011 - views received 12.07.2011: No objection s.t.c.
Publicity	Site notice posted 11.07.2011; expired 01.08.2011 1 Neighbour notification letter posted 21.06.2011; expired 12.07.2011  20 representations received raising no objection or in support of the proposal. Main points raised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development will finish row of houses and improve the currently scrappy land.</li> <li>• Development is within the village envelope and building line.</li> <li>• Development is of suitable scale and character and will prevent large-scale development of the plot.</li> </ul>

### The site and its surroundings

This application relates to an undeveloped parcel of green space located on the southern side of the junction of Summerfield Road with Belbroughton Road, adjacent the existing property at 19 Summerfield Road.

The site is within the Green Belt and within the designated Holy Cross village envelope.

### Proposal

This is an outline application and seeks approval for matters relating to access, layout and scale for the construction of a detached, two-storey, 4 bedroom dwelling located approximately 3m to the west of the existing property at 19 Summerfield Road. The dwelling is to be set back approximately 6.7m from the pavement and is therefore inline with the prevailing building line on the southern side of Summerfield Road. This set back provides space for a driveway supporting parking for two vehicles.

In terms of proposed dimensions, the dwelling is to measure 15m in width, 10.7m in depth and 7.4m in height. A single storey garage is located on the eastern side of the house, adjacent 19 Summerfield Road.

Details relating to landscaping and appearance are reserved matters to be approved by the Council at a later date.

### Relevant Policies

WCSP	CTC.1, CTC.5, D.38, D.39
BDLP	DS2, DS13, DS5, S9, TR11
DCS2	CP3, CP17
Others	SPG1, PPS1, PPG2

### Relevant Planning History

11/0329	Proposed dwelling on land adjoining 19 Summerfield Road - Refused 26.05.2011
10/0483	Proposed dwelling - Withdrawn 16.08.2010
B/1995/0020	Erection of two detached houses - Refused 13.03.1995
BR/436/1970	Two dwellings with garages - Granted
B7181	Erection of two dwellings - Refused April 1980. Appeal dismissed April 1982

### Notes

This outline application follows the recent refusal, determined at the June 2011 Planning Committee, of a full application (10/0329) for a new dwelling on land adjoining 19 Summerfield Road. The refusal reasons given in relation to the full application are outlined below:

1. It is considered that the new dwelling is inappropriate development materially harmful to the openness of the Green Belt. The proposal is therefore considered contrary to policy DS2, DS5 and S9 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan, policy D.39 of the Worcestershire County Structure Plan and the provisions of PPG2: Green Belts. No very special circumstances have been put forward that would outweigh the harm that would be caused.
2. The proposed dwelling would be a highly visible urban feature which would adversely impact on the character and visual amenity of the open village vista, which is considered contrary to policy CTC.1 of the Worcester County Structure Plan, Bromsgrove District Council's Residential Design Guide SPG 1, policies DS13 and S9 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan and the guidance in paragraph 3.15 of PPG2 Green Belts.

## Assessment

The main issue with this application is whether the proposed development is an appropriate form of development in the Green Belt and, if not, whether very special circumstances exist to outweigh the level of harm caused.

Although this application is at outline stage, it is necessary to consider if there are any inherent problems with the site, in particular, in relation to the matters of access, layout and scale for which approval is sought. The impact of the proposal on the character of the street scene, its impact on the amenity of the nearby occupiers, technical matters relating to highways and drainage, and the views of third parties will also be addressed.

## Green Belt Policy

Policy D.39 of the Worcestershire County Structure Plan and policy DS2 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan 2004 are in general accordance with advice given under PPG2: Green Belts in stating that inappropriate development in the Green Belt will not be allowed unless very special circumstances exist to outweigh the harm caused. Policy DS2 reflects PPG2 in setting out the instances where development in the Green Belt may be considered appropriate. With regards to new dwellings, these instances are further defined by policy S9 of the BDLP.

Policy S9 states that new dwellings will only be considered where the dwelling falls within the following categories.

- Required for forestry or agriculture.
- Re-use of a rural building.
- Affordable housing.
- Limited infill within the defined village envelope.
- Replacement dwelling.
- Sub-division of an existing dwelling.

The application site is located within the Village Envelope of Holy Cross and as such I refer to policy DS5 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan 2004 (BDLP). This provides that within defined Village Envelope settlements limited housing infill may be acceptable. For the purposes of this policy 'limited infill' is defined as the development of sites located between existing development which are capable of accommodating no more than 2 dwellings, in a form which maintains the line and form of the existing buildings.

Whilst the application site is located within the Village Envelope of Holy Cross, it would not be located between existing development within the defined settlement. I am not therefore minded to treat the proposal as a form of infill development.

In any event, the explanatory text to policy DS5 indicates that '*where gaps in frontages do occur there will be no automatic presumption in favour of development. For instance, it may be desirable to protect some 'gaps' from development because of the contribution of the site to the street scene or general character of the village or where it is desirable to retain views of the surrounding countryside.*'

Further to this, 5.5 of SPG1 states: '*Gaps within a village street for example can help to impart a rural atmosphere and this is particularly important in loose-knit villages where the spaces can be as important as the buildings themselves.*'

In this instance, I am of the view that it would be desirable to maintain this gap in the Village Envelope. The site is considered to serve an important Green Belt function by acting as a natural buffer between the Village Envelope Settlement of Holy Cross and the surrounding development to the south west of the site. Development in this location would have the effect of conjoining these two areas of existing development resulting in harm to the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it.

I am also of the view that the natural appearance of the site helps to preserve the rural character of the village when viewed from Belbroughton Road. Furthermore it is considered that the site helps to protect views into the open Green Belt from Summerfield Road.

As the proposal is not considered to represent an acceptable form of infill development, having regard to policies DS2 and S9 of the BDLP the proposal will be treated as an inappropriate form of development in the Green Belt.

#### Very Special Circumstances

In relation to Green Belts, the emphasis is on developers to demonstrate that very special circumstances exist to outweigh a proposal's harm to the Green Belt. The application's Design and Access Statement states:

"...should the Council take the view that the proposed development of this site for one dwelling comprises inappropriate development it is argued for the applicant that very special circumstances apply in relation to this specific site given its visual appearance of unkempt ground, especially overgrown in the summer months is detracting from the rest of Summerfield Road. Further, the granting of permission also allows a replacement indigenous hedgerow to be provided to bound and screen the site to the visual improvement of the frontage to Belbroughton Road."

Paragraph 1.5 of PPG2 lists the five purposes of including land within the Green Belt including "to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment" and paragraph 1.4 explains that one of the intentions of Green Belt policy is to keep land permanently open. It is noted that the most important attribute of Green Belts is their openness. As such, it is not viewed that the very special circumstances put forward by the applicant carries weight to such an extent as to outweigh the harm to openness of the Green Belt that the proposal represents.

#### Design / Street Scene

The appearance of the proposed dwelling is to be determined as a reserved matter at a later stage. In relation to the proposed layout of the dwelling, it is noted that the existing dwellings on Summerfield Road are two-storey and the scale of the proposal would not be incongruous in this context. Additionally, the proposal would respect the existing building line on the southern side of Summerfield Road.

I note the large number of comments in support of this proposal and the view that a dwelling in this location would 'finish the row of houses' and 'improve on the scrappy appearance of the site.' However, it is the loss of the open character of the street scene at this conspicuous corner location that I view as harmful to visual amenity. The increased bulk of the proposed dwelling is therefore viewed as detrimental to this open and rural village vista.

### Residential Amenity Issues

The proposed dwelling is set within a well sized plot and in respect of private amenity space, and exceeds the total area required by SPG1. I am also satisfied that the location of the proposed dwelling can accommodate a detached dwelling without raising concerns in relation to privacy or overlooking, in accordance with the residential amenity guidelines as set out in SPG1.

### Highways and servicing issues

Policy TR11 of the BDLP requires all development to incorporate safe means of access and egress appropriate to the nature of the local highway network and to provide sufficient off-street parking. The County Highways Officer has been consulted with regards to the proposals and has raised no objection subject to conditions.

The Council's Drainage Engineer has been consulted and no objection has been raised subject to conditions requiring the submission of drainage details. On this basis, I consider that the development can be appropriately serviced.

### Other matters

I note the numerous letters of support received from local residents. The points raised in these letters have been adequately addressed in the report sections above.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, it is considered that the new dwelling is inappropriate development materially harmful to the openness of the Green Belt by virtue of its increased bulk. The proposal is therefore considered contrary to policies DS2, DS5 and S9 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan, policy D.39 of the Worcestershire County Structure Plan and the provisions of PPG2: Green Belts. No very special circumstances have been put forward that would outweigh the harm that would be caused.

**RECOMMENDATION:** that permission be **REFUSED**.

1. It is considered that the new dwelling is inappropriate development materially harmful to the openness of the Green Belt. The proposal is therefore considered contrary to policies DS2, DS5 and S9 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan, policy D.39 of the Worcestershire County Structure Plan and the provisions of PPG2: Green Belts. No very special circumstances have been put forward that would outweigh the harm that would be caused.

- 2 The proposed dwelling would be a highly visible urban feature which would adversely impact on the character and visual amenity of the open village vista, which is considered contrary to policy CTC.1 of the Worcester County Structure Plan, Bromsgrove District Council's Residential Design Guide SPG 1, policies DS13 and S9 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan and the guidance in paragraph 3.15 of PPG2 Green Belts.